Louisiana State Rail Plan

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DOTD
LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION & DEVELOPMENT

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1.0 Role of Rail in Statewide Transportation

Louisiana's railroads are integral to the national rail network, with an extensive system comprising over 3,000 miles of track used for freight and passenger services. The Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (DOTD) developed this document – the Louisiana State Rail Plan (*LA SRP* or the Rail Plan) – in collaboration with a wide range of stakeholders to support future planning, policies, and investment in Louisiana's passenger and freight rail system. This document satisfies all federal guidelines set forth in the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2008 (PRIIA) and is in compliance with Title 49 USC Section 22102. The *LA SRP* provides a thorough assessment of Louisiana's existing and future rail conditions, and identifies and prioritizes projects, policies, and strategies to support the state's rail-related goals.

1.1 Organization of the Plan

As required by the FRA guidance, this SRP establishes a vision for freight and passenger rail in Louisiana, includes an inventory and assessment of existing and future conditions for Louisiana's passenger and freight rail system, and provides a short- and long-range investment program for existing and proposed freight and passenger rail infrastructure and services in the state. The state's railroads, rail users, industry, and public and private stakeholders were involved in the development of this plan.

The *LA SRP* update is organized as follows:

Chapter 1— Role of Rail in Statewide Transportation: Outlines Louisiana's vision and goals for improving the state's rail network, describes the current and anticipated role of rail in Louisiana's multimodal transportation system, and the state's ability to provide political, legal, and financial support to freight and passenger rail service development.

Chapter 2— Louisiana's Existing Rail System & Use: Provides an overview of Louisiana's existing freight and passenger rail systems, including ownership, operations, and facilities of the railroad system, existing and projected rail demand, and trends impacting rail demand.

Chapter 3— Rail Service Needs and Proposed Rail Improvements: Describes the known and proposed needs and investments prioritized to address challenges in Louisiana's freight and passenger rail systems. Identifies known and potential rail projects based on stakeholder input and describes proposed improvements for freight and passenger rail.

Chapter 4— Rail Service and Investment Program: Describes the state's long-term vision for rail service and the role rail plays in Louisiana's larger multimodal transportation network. Presents the investments necessary to achieve the state's passenger and freight rail vision described in Chapter 1.

Chapter 5—Plan Coordination and Review: Summarizes Louisiana's approach towards public- and private-sector stakeholder engagement and synthesizes findings from these outreach efforts.

Appendix A—Freight and Passenger Rail Program of Projects: Details the passenger and freight rail program projects

Several technical memorandums (tech memos) support the *LA SRP.* The *LA SRP* refers readers to appropriate sections of the supporting technical memos, wherever necessary. These technical memos include:

Tech Memo 1: Economic Impact Analysis of Rail

Tech Memo 2: Stakeholder Interview Summaries Report

The *LA SRP* is fully compliant with PRIIA's State Rail Plan requirements, as shown in **Table 1**.

Table 1: FRA State Rail Plan Requirements

FRA State Rail Plan Requirement	*LA SRP* Location
An executive summary that highlights key facts and findings of the state rail plan.	Executive Summary (separate document)
An inventory of the existing overall rail transportation system and rail services and facilities within the state and an analysis of the role of rail transportation within the state's surface transportation system.	*LA SRP* Chapters 1 and 2
A review of all rail lines within the state, including all freight rail lines, intercity passenger rail lines, commuter rail lines, and proposed high-speed rail corridors and significant rail line segments not currently in service.	*LA SRP* Chapter 2
A statement of the state's passenger rail service objectives, including minimum service levels, for rail transportation routes.	*LA SRP* Chapters 1, 2, and 3
A general analysis of rail's transportation, economic, and environmental impacts in the state.	*LA SRP* Chapters 2 and 4
A long-range rail investment program for current and future freight and passenger infrastructure in the state that includes a list of rail capital projects, a funding plan, public and private benefits for projects, and a statement of correlation between public funding and public benefits.	*LA SRP* Chapters 3 and 4
A statement of public financing issues for rail projects and service in the state, including a list of current and prospective public capital and operating funding resources, public subsidies, state taxation, and other financial policies relating to rail infrastructure development.	*LA SRP* Chapters 1 and 4

FRA State Rail Plan Requirement	*LA SRP* Location
An identification of rail infrastructure issues within the state that reflects consultation with all relevant stakeholders.	*LA SRP* Chapters 3, 4, and 5
A review of the major passenger and freight intermodal connections and facilities within the state.	*LA SRP* Chapter 2
A review of publicly funded projects within the state to improve rail transportation safety and security, including all major projects funded under Section 130 of Title 23.	*LA SRP* Chapters 3 and 4
A performance evaluation of passenger rail services operating in the state, including possible improvements in those services and a description of strategies to achieve those improvements.	*LA SRP* Chapters 2, 3, and 4
A compilation of studies and reports on high-speed rail corridor development within the state not included in a previous plan under this subchapter and a plan for funding any recommended development of such corridors in the state.	*LA SRP* Chapters 1 and 4
A statement that the state is in compliance with Title 49 USC Section 22102.	*LA SRP* Chapter 1

1.2 Louisiana's Multimodal Transportation Goals

The Louisiana Statewide Transportation Plan's (STP) goals were formulated to align with the mission of the DOTD, which is to plan, design, build and sustain a safe and reliable multimodal transportation and infrastructure system that enhances mobility and economic opportunity. These goals focus on infrastructure preservation, safety, economic competitiveness, community development, environmental sustainability, and resilience. The multimodal transportation draft[1] goals are:

- **Preservation**: Maintain DOTD's multimodal infrastructure in a state of good repair.
- **Safety**: Provide safe and secure travel across all transportation modes.
- **Economic Competitiveness**: Deliver an efficient transportation system that supports employment and economic growth, commerce, and tourism.
- **Community Development and Enhancement**: Support other state agencies and other transportation partners to ensure the transportation system serves all Louisianans.
- **Environmental Sustainability**: Ensure transportation policies and investments are sensitive to Louisiana's environment, history, and culture.

[1] DOTD's STP update is underway, to be completed in 2025. The goals are considered draft until STP is approved.

- **Resilience**: Improve the ability of the transportation system to withstand and recover from extreme weather and other disruptive events.

1.3 Role of Rail in Louisiana

1.3.1 The Role of Freight Rail in Louisiana

Louisiana's network of rail infrastructure is spread across the state and plays an important and outsized role in the transportation of freight throughout the country. In 2021, the amount of rail commodity transported over track in Louisiana exceeded 137 million tons and $180 billion. All six Class I freight rail carriers[2] operating in the United States (U.S.) converge in New Orleans via the Huey P. Long Bridge and the New Orleans Public Belt Railroad (NOPB). Further north, the Meridian Speedway between Shreveport and Meridian, Mississippi provides an important link between the southeastern and southwestern U.S. This convergence of major carriers positions Louisiana as a critical national link important for through movement, with New Orleans serving as one of the primary gateways between the eastern and western U.S.

The Association of American Railroads (AAR) compiles data from all 50 states to create annual rankings for freight rail categories (see **Table 2**). Louisiana ranks 13th in the nation for rail tons originated and ranks 16th for rail tons terminated. The statewide totals of imported and exported freight rail tonnage are well-balanced. More detailed information about the rail system in Louisiana can be found in **Chapter 2 Louisiana's Existing Rail System & Use** of this SRP.

Table 2: Louisiana Freight Rail Rankings (2021)

Category	Louisiana Ranking
Number of Railroads	17th
Total Rail Miles	22nd
Carloads Originated	20th
Carloads Terminated	20th
Rail Tons Originated	13th
Rail Tons Terminated	16th

Source: AAR State Rankings 2021.
Note: AAR methodology for data reporting presented in this table varies from data provided throughout this SRP. The information contained contextualizes Louisiana's freight railroad system within the national network.

[2] Class I denotes large line haul railroads with total operating revenue of $490+ million (2018$). Amtrak, which operates three long distance routes in Louisiana at time of writing, is classified as a Class I passenger railroad.

1.3.2 The Role of Passenger Rail in Louisiana

Passenger rail services in Louisiana strengthens the intermodal transportation system by improving accessibility, connectivity, and travel efficiency to communities across the state. The state's three long distance Amtrak services provide important economic benefits to the state by developing an efficient, safe, and seamless multimodal transportation system. There are seven Amtrak Stations in Louisiana that serve three routes: City of New Orleans (Chicago to New Orleans), Crescent (New York City to New Orleans), and the Sunset Limited (Los Angeles to New Orleans). These routes had a combined ridership of 272,658 passengers during COVID-impacted 2021.[3] Combined ridership for these routes totaled 623,677 in 2019. Except for limited specialty rail operated exclusively for passenger service in the congested Downtown New Orleans area, Amtrak services travel over infrastructure owned by freight railroads. The eight miles of dedicated passenger rail infrastructure are in New Orleans where Amtrak and the New Orleans Union Passenger Terminal (NOUPT) operate approximately 1.5 and 6.5 track miles respectively to accommodate the three long distance intercity routes. Amtrak Stations in Louisiana are located in Hammond, Lafayette, Lake Charles, New Iberia, New Orleans, Schriever, and Slidell. Passengers boarding or alighting (exiting) Amtrak trains at these stations totaled 83,842 in 2021, down from a pre-COVID passenger count of 176,159 in 2019. Apart from the immediate impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, ridership has been constrained through poor on-time performance, rolling stock shortages, and service outages that have all increased since the early 2010s.

1.4 Vision, Goals, and Objectives for Louisiana's Rail Transportation

Defining a clear vision, supported by a set of well-defined goals and objectives is crucial for guiding the rail development, investment and policy decisions in the state, ensuring alignment with broader transportation and sustainability objectives. The project team used the vision and goals adopted by Louisiana SRP 2020 as the baseline and based on input from the DOTD and the Rail Advisory Committee (RAC) defined the new vision statement and goals for the state. The Louisiana SRP vision statement and supporting goals, and objectives are informed by the RAC as well as by DOTD's STP and Modal Plans.

1.4.1 Vision

DOTD has developed the following vision statement for rail transportation in the state:

"The state of Louisiana envisions a dynamic state rail system that ensures safe and efficient mobility of all passengers and goods. We envision a balanced multimodal rail network that drives economic growth, forwards environmental sustainability, offers improved ability to

[3] Amtrak, *Amtrak Route Ridership FY 21 vs. FY 19*

withstand and recover from natural disasters or other disruptive events, and enhances access and connectivity throughout the state. Through strategic investments and leadership, we expand infrastructure, enhance accessibility, and foster collaborative partnerships that ensure all voices are heard and needs of our stakeholders are met."

1.4.2 Goals and Objectives

DOTD established eight goals to achieve the state's rail vision (**Table 3**). Within each goal, there are several objectives; objectives are distinct from goals in that they are linked to measurable outcomes.

Table 3: Louisiana State Rail Plan Goals and Objectives

Goal	Objectives
1: Enhanced Safety Levels: Prioritize safety measures and initiatives to minimize accidents, improve rail infrastructure maintenance, and implement effective emergency response plans.	• Minimize accidents, injuries, and fatalities at highway-rail grade crossings in Louisiana through crossing closures, track relocations, other safety improvements, and grade separations. • Reduce illegal trespassing and enhance security on rail rights-of-way consistent with goals, objectives, and action steps identified in the Rail Grade Crossing State Action Plan. • Eliminate safety hazards by proactively working with stakeholders and agencies responsible for the freight transportation system. • Collaborate with railroads and local communities on grade crossing improvements, including grade separations in key areas.

Goal	Objectives
2: Infrastructure Preservation and Expansion for Improved Multimodal Connectivity: Invest in preserving and expanding rail infrastructure to accommodate increased capacity, improve efficiency, and enhance multimodal connectivity. This includes track maintenance, signal upgrades, modernization of facilities, and improved connections with other transportation modes, ports, and the hinterland.	• Support and improve the interchange of Class I rail traffic in New Orleans. Implement New Orleans Gateway (a program of projects). • Improve the capacity and condition of the state's short line railroads. • Enhance rail connectivity to ports and industries enabling smooth first and last mile connections. • Encourage multimodal integration. • Continue with Amtrak station upgrades. • Leverage public-private partnerships for funding rail improvements. • Develop funding strategies for passenger and freight rail initiatives. • Develop programs to fund maintenance of new and existing rail infrastructure. • Invest in short line railroads' infrastructure to assure their ability to handle heavy weight carloadings. • Develop short line tax credit programs to support railroad investments towards addressing deferred maintenance issues from previous owners. • Establish a dedicated funding source associated with Louisiana ACT No. 22[4].
3: Improved Freight Transportation Services: Enhance freight rail services by optimizing freight movement, reducing congestion, and promoting efficient logistics and supply chain operations.	• Encourage increased use of rail service by promoting rail service opportunities; providing facilities for businesses to access rail service; and assisting localities and rail users in understanding railroad economics, revenue needs of individual lines, and land use requirements. • Improve local and state coordination and communication with freight railroads, and other modes of transportation.

[4] Louisiana ACT No. 22 established a designated Rail Program within DOTD that is empowered to assist in funding rail improvements. However, there is no dedicated funding source associated with this authorization.

Goal	Objectives
4: Enhanced Mobility of All Passengers: Develop and improve passenger rail services to provide convenient, reliable, and affordable transportation options to all. This includes expanding routes, adding frequency, improving connectivity with other modes of transportation, upgrading stations, and enhancing passenger amenities.	• Enhance existing services – ensure adequate service frequency and maintain and improve existing stations. • Work with Amtrak to ensure improved access to rail stations for travelers with disabilities. • Engage the freight railroads in new passenger rail planning initiatives. • Continue to develop passenger rail service in the Gulf Coast corridor. • Develop new Baton Rouge – New Orleans intercity rail service. • Explore feasibility for introduction of new intercity passenger rail services between key locations, including Baton Rouge to Shreveport and the I-20 Corridor.
5: Enhanced Economic Competitiveness: Leverage the rail network to stimulate economic growth, attract new industries, and support existing businesses. This goal focuses on enhancing rail access to industrial areas, ports, and other economic centers, facilitating trade and commerce.	• Encourage economic development through investments in the rail system, e.g., improved access to marine and river ports, intermodal facilities, and industrial leads and spurs. • Coordinate among state agencies, including the Department of Economic Development and Department of Environmental Quality, and private entities to identify and implement rail investments and opportunities that encourage economic growth and development in all regions of Louisiana.
6: Promote Environmental Sustainability: Encourage environment friendly practices and investments in rail infrastructure development and operations to reduce negative environmental impacts. Consider the integration of rail with other sustainable transportation modes to reduce overall carbon footprint. For instance, passenger rail service could be integrated with other low-carbon urban mobility modes, like public transit, electric bus networks, bike-sharing, and pedestrian pathways.	• Enhance coordination between rail transportation, land use planning, and regional and statewide development practices to reduce negative environmental impacts. • Make strategic investments to reduce the negative impacts of exposure to noise and air pollution arising from rail operations in urban areas. • Support of passenger rail and multimodal integration that work to shift freight and passenger traffic to more environmentally friendly rail transportation.

Goal	Objectives
7: Enhanced Resilience of Rail Network: Improve the ability of the transportation system to withstand and recover from extreme events and other disruptive events, including cybersecurity incidents and pandemics.	• Maintain alternate access routes and redundancy in the system, including via other modes, for rapid recovery from weather or other disaster events. • Improve system security to protect people, cargo, and critical infrastructure assets.
8: Meaningful Stakeholder Engagement and Community Partnerships: Foster collaboration among government agencies, rail operators, communities, and other stakeholders to ensure effective planning, decision-making, and implementation of rail initiatives. This goal prioritizes open communication, partnerships, and coordination. Second, focus on increasing public awareness and understanding of the benefits of rail transportation. Promote community engagement in the planning process, gather feedback, and address concerns to ensure the rail plan reflects the needs and aspirations of the residents as well as businesses.	• Continue outreach to stakeholders. • Continue outreach to the public, communities, local leaders, and other stakeholders to assure their wants and needs with regard to rail transportation are heard and included.

1.5 Rail in Statewide Multimodal Transportation Planning Efforts

The *LA SRP* builds on and coordinates with both prior and ongoing planning efforts in Louisiana. This section describes these parallel planning efforts to contextualize the role of the *LA SRP* in statewide planning.

1.5.1 Statewide Transportation Plan

The *LA SRP* is part of DOTD's ongoing effort to update its STP, scheduled to be complete in 2025. The STP is a long range, comprehensive plan, developed with stakeholder and public input, to establish a multimodal transportation system that is not only safe and efficient today, but is equipped to handle certain and uncertain transportation challenges between now and 2055. The Plan comprises all modes including highways and bridges, freight and passenger rail, ports and waterways, aviation, trucking, public transportation, and non-motorized transportation with a 30-year horizon updated every ten years. The planning process seeks to

explore and lay out a strategy for how Louisiana can invest in its multimodal transportation system to meet the state's vision, goals, and objectives.

1.5.2 Modal Plans

Alongside the STP, DOTD is also updating three modal plans, namely the *LA SRP*, the State Freight Plan, and the Louisiana Aviation System Plan. These modal plans are system level, tactical plans that provide strategic direction to address needs in the state's rail, freight, and aviation systems respectively. Together, the modal plans seek to guide the direction of transportation in Louisiana for the next several years.

While the STP sets long-range policy and strategic direction for development of asset- and system-specific actions, the purpose of the modal plans, including the *LA SRP*, is to guide understanding of modal needs and to establish strategies and actions that align with overarching STP goals.

1.6 Governance and Planning

1.6.1 Federal Governance and Planning

Most rail-related interests are concentrated at U.S. DOT agencies including the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), Federal Transit Administration (FTA), and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), along with the stand-alone Surface Transportation Board (STB). In addition, a number of other federal departments and agencies also have ongoing roles and responsibilities related to the rail industry. These are summarized in **Table 4**.

Table 4: Federal Departments, Agencies, and Boards Involved in Rail

Agency	Scope of Activity	Authorities/Responsibilities
Federal Railroad Administration (FRA)	Train/ Track Safety	• Develops and enforces basic operating rules for train safety, tank car safety, railroad industrial hygiene, rail equipment safety, and grade crossing safety and trespass prevention. • Oversees employee hours of service regulations and signal and train control regulations. • Inspects and audits railroad track. • Tracks rail movement of spent nuclear fuel and radioactive waste. • Manages the Rail Safety Improvement Act of 2008 (RSIA).
	Rail Funding/ Financing	• Oversees Railroad Rehabilitation and Improvement Financing program (RRIF). • Manages the Passenger Rail Improvement and Investment Act of 2008 (PRIIA). • Administers rail grants for various programs, including IIJA rail funding provisions.
	Guidance	• Provides guidance and analysis of intercity passenger rail and high-speed rail services.
Federal Transit Administration (FTA)	Rail Funding/ Financing	• Oversees grants to transit providers and ensures grant recipients manage their programs in accordance with federal, statutory, and administrative requirements. • Funds rolling stock and infrastructure for regional/commuter rail services.
	Technical Assistance	• Provides technical assistance and guidance to state and local commuter rail providers.
	Safety	• Administers program to coordinate system safety among all transit providers, including heavy rail and light rail.
Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)	Rail Funding/ Financing	• Administers Section 130 grade crossing safety improvement program

Agency	Scope of Activity	Authorities/Responsibilities
Surface Transportation Board (STB)	Administrative Authority	• Settles railroad rate and service disputes. • Reviews proposed railroad mergers, acquisitions, abandonments, and new line construction. • Mediates conflicts between passenger operators (including Amtrak and other intercity and commuter rail operators) and host railroads. • Investigates causes of poor on-time performance (OTP) or other intercity passenger rail service quality deficiencies caused by the operator, host railroad, or managing entity.
Pipeline and Hazardous Material Safety Administration (PHMSA)	Hazardous Materials Safety	• Regulates and enacts rules that ensure safe movement of hazardous materials. • Tracks data on hazardous materials. • Permits, inspects, and enforces safety of hazardous materials.
Department of Homeland Security (DHS)	Security	• Establishes requirements for national rail security strategy and risk assessment. • Tracks hazmat shipments. • Creates railroad requirements for developing institutional risk assessments. • Conducts programs for rail security training. • Conducts rail security research and development (R&D).
DHS: U.S. Coast Guard	Construction Permitting and Funding	• Manages permitting for structures crossing navigable waterways. • Administers Truman-Hobbs Act, which funds bridge projects over navigable waterways.
Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)	Environmental Regulation	• Regulates and establishes locomotive emission standards. • Enforces the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) that requires environmental review for proposed rail projects.
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)	Construction Permitting	• Manages permitting for construction on waterways and wetlands.

1.6.2 Louisiana State Rail Governance and Planning

DOTD is Louisiana's State Rail Transportation Authority (STRA) and State Rail Plan Approval Authority (SRPAA). DOTD is responsible for state-level rail planning in Louisiana, which includes development of the SRP. The State Rail Plan Guidance issued by the FRA in September 2013 details content for each SRP. DOTD works with federal and local partners to plan and implement much-needed upgrades to rail infrastructure. Statewide rail planning efforts culminate in the SRP, which establishes the state's immediate and long-range goals and planning activities for maintaining and developing the state's rail network. DOTD administers several rail-related programs, largely aimed at ensuring the safe and efficient operation of the statewide rail network.

DOTD is comprised of four primary divisions: Multimodal Commerce, Engineering, Operations, and Management and Finance. DOTD has an appointed Secretary that oversees administration of the divisions.

Rail-related responsibilities are largely located within DOTD's Central Office in Baton Rouge, but some rail-related activities are also carried out at the Department's nine District Offices located around the state. These offices and their functions are detailed in **Section 1.5.2.3**. DOTD coordinates with Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) representing the state's most populated regions when studying, planning, and constructing rail improvements.

1.6.2.1 The Office of Multimodal Commerce

The Office of Multimodal Commerce was created within DOTD by Act No. 719 during the 2014 Regular Legislative Session for the purpose of advancing multimodal transportation in Louisiana. Aside from coordinating the state's programs for ports, railroads, aviation, and commercial trucking, the Office helps make the case for broad and diverse funding solutions that will address the state's pressing infrastructure needs.

The Office of Multimodal Commerce consists of four divisions: Aviation, Ports and Waterways, Freight and Passenger Rail, and Commercial Trucking. The Freight and Passenger Rail Division's mission is to "continuously improve our rail infrastructure for passenger and freight movement to nurture economic development and enhance our quality of life through the development of an efficient, safe, and seamless multimodal transportation system."[5]

In compliance with the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act's recommendation to establish a state freight advisory committee, the Multimodal Commerce Advisory Commission was established in 2016 to advise the Office of Multimodal Commerce.

[5] DOTD, *Office of Multimodal Commerce* webpage (accessed September 2023)

1.6.2.2 Railroad Safety Unit

In addition to the Freight and Passenger Rail Division, rail is also under the purview of the Rail Safety Unit within the Office of Engineering. The Rail Safety Unit is responsible for rail safety-related activities, which include all grade crossing and other highway-related activities involving railroads.

The Rail Safety Unit oversees rail and highway projects implemented through the federal Highway Safety Improvement Program, maintains an inventory of all grade crossings in the state, and conducts diagnostic reviews of proposed crossing improvement projects and crossing consolidations or closures.

1.6.2.3 District Offices

At the DOTD District Offices, District Railroad Coordinators oversee grade crossing conditions and project implementation. Coordinators also participate in crossing diagnostic teams that evaluate grade crossing projects. District Offices are located in New Orleans, Lafayette, Bossier City, Monroe, Lake Charles, Alexandria, Chase, Baton Rouge, and Hammond.

1.6.2.4 Additional Public Sector Rail Involvement

While rail planning in Louisiana is primarily the responsibility of DOTD, numerous other state and local agencies have some level of interaction with the rail industry, particularly from the perspective of economic development and safety. Multiple state entities include rail within their portfolio of responsibilities and objectives. State-level agencies that interact with rail issues include the Louisiana Economic Development (LED), Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LDEQ), Louisiana Public Service Commission (PSC), and the Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (GOHSEP).

1.6.3 Louisiana Economic Development

LED is the state's lead economic development agency, responsible for strengthening the state's business environment and creating a more vibrant economy. LED oversees a variety of programs and services that create jobs, attract new investment, encourage community development, and promote Louisiana.

LED's Office of Business Development has participated with railroad partners to establish new facilities and provide grants to public agencies through the state's Rapid Response fund for rail infrastructure improvements such as expanding rail spurs.

1.6.4 Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality

LDEQ's mission is to provide service to the people of Louisiana through comprehensive environmental protection in order to promote health, safety, and welfare.[6] This agency manages all the state's environmental concerns, including responses to citizen complaints and environmental emergencies. With the goal of reducing rail emissions in urbanized areas, LDEQ has administered federal stimulus grants to railroads for the installation of locomotive idle reduction equipment.

1.6.5 Louisiana Public Service Commission

The Louisiana PSC exercises regulatory jurisdiction over public utilities in the state, including jurisdiction over the closure of private railroad crossings. The PSC is authorized to participate in the FRA's Safety State Participation Grant Program under 45 U.S. Code (USC) § 20105.

1.6.6 Louisiana Govenor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness

GOHSEP serves as the state's single point of contact for Homeland Security. The agency maintains a Critical Infrastructure Protection Plan to augment current security and assist facilities deemed critical to the nation and state in reducing their vulnerabilities.

The Louisiana State Police Emergency Operations Center (EOC) is a state-of-the-art command and control center co-located with the GOHSEP on the Louisiana State Police Headquarters compound. From this location, members of the Critical Incident Management Staff (CIMS) coordinate disaster planning, response and mitigation to critical incidents. The State Police's Emergency Services Unit (ESU) is the primary agency in Louisiana with both the regulatory and statutory authority for hazardous material (hazmat) and explosives. ESU directs trained State Police personnel who conduct inspections of all transport modes.

1.6.7 Local Partners Involved with Rail

Rail operations are becoming an increasingly critical issue for local agencies. These agencies are most concerned about safety and highway congestion but also recognize the importance of rail access for preserving existing industries and attracting new industries to potential sites, as well as access to passenger rail service in their region. Agencies most involved at the local level are summarized below.

[6] Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality, *About LDEQ webpage* (accessed September 2023)

1.6.7.1 Metropolitan Planning Organizations

DOTD works with Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) to ensure the state's rail vision, goals, and project priorities align with the various needs of Louisiana's major population centers. The following metropolitan areas have MPOs: Baton Rouge, Lake Charles, Acadiana, Monroe, Alexandria, New Orleans, Houma, Slidell, Covington/Mandeville, South Tangipahoa, and Shreveport. MPOs are federally-mandated and federally-funded transportation policy-making organizations that are comprised of local government and transportation officials. MPOs are required to be formed for any urbanized area with a population greater than 50,000. Each MPO works to allocate federal funds toward local and regional transportation projects that are critical for the safety and growth of its region.

1.6.7.2 Public Economic Development Agencies

In addition to MPOs, local economic development agencies across the state have a vested interest in rail transportation. Although these agencies do not generally work directly with freight railroad operators, their interest lies in the level of rail services and rail assistance programs available because connectivity with the national rail network is important to local economic development agencies. Unlike MPOs, economic development agencies are not statutorily involved in rail planning in Louisiana.

1.6.7.3 Local Transit Agencies

There are six full-reporting local transit agencies and multiple reduced-reporting agencies that either fully report or do not fully report monthly ridership data to the FTA's National Transit Database (NTD). The New Orleans Regional Transit Authority (NORTA) is the only transit agency in the state that operates rail service in the form of the city's historic streetcar system. In 2021, NORTA reported the operation of 39 track miles within the City of New Orleans.

1.6.8 Compliance with Federal Requirements

This *SRP* is part of a larger planning effort undertaken by DOTD that is intended to maintain Louisiana's compliance with PRIIA and Title 49 § 22102 of the USC.[7] DOTD attests to the following statements on Louisiana's rail program:

- Louisiana has an adequate plan for rail transportation in the state and a suitable process for updating, revising, and modifying the plan.
- This plan is administered or coordinated by a designated state authority and provides for a fair distribution of resources.

[7] U.S. Government Publishing Office, *49 USC Title 49 – Transportation* (accessed September 2023)

- DOTD:
    - is authorized to develop, promote, supervise, and support safe, adequate, and efficient rail transportation;
    - employs or will employ sufficient qualified and trained personnel;
    - maintains or will maintain adequate programs of investigation, research, promotion, and development with opportunity for public participation; and
    - is designated and directed to take all practicable steps (by itself or with other state authorities) to improve rail transportation safety and reduce energy use and pollution related to transportation.
- DOTD ensures that it maintains or will maintain adequate procedures for financial control, accounting, and performance evaluation for the proper use of assistance provided by the U.S. Government.

1.7 State Funding Authority

Title 48, §388 USC provides DOTD the powers necessary for the state to qualify for federal rail service assistance pursuant to the provisions of the Railroad Revitalization and Regulatory Reform Act of 1976 or any other applicable federal act, including to:

- Administer and coordinate or modify the SRP as required by Federal Public Law 94- 210, as amended.
- Provide satisfactory assurances on behalf of the state that such fiscal control and fund accounting procedures will be adopted by the state as may be necessary to assure proper disbursement of an account for federal funds paid to the state.
- Provide financial assistance, within the limits of the funds appropriated for this purpose, for the preservation of operations and maintenance of any railroad within the state as provided for in relevant federal legislation. DOTD may act as the agent in cooperation with any railroad or regional transportation authority, local government units, or any person, and the federal government in any rail freight service assistance program.
- Cooperate with other states in connection with preserving any rail freight services within the state. In carrying out the authority conferred by this section, the DOTD may enter general contractual arrangements with other states.
- Contract with any person, firm, corporation, agency, or government to provide, maintain or improve rail freight service within the state.
- To promulgate rules and regulations consistent with and for the purpose of adequately implementing this act.

Other state laws relevant to rail oversight include Rail grade crossings (49§382-394); and financing through the Louisiana Economic and Port Development Infrastructure Fund (39§100.36); and for the PSC to participate in rail safety inspection (45§561).

1.7.1 Funding Sources and Programs

DOTD programs specific rail projects funded through the state's annual capital outlay process, where proposed projects are discussed in hearings held by the state legislature. Upon being enacted by the legislature the capital outlay bill is presented to the governor for final approval. State law also grants the Louisiana Secretary of Transportation the authority to disburse federal rail funding and establish a state program from which loans and grants can be provided to qualified entities. Competitive grants are another funding source, with federal programs typically covering up to 80% of project costs. Louisiana has been successful in recent years in being awarded funding for rail projects across the state.

Louisiana complies with Title 49 USC § 22102, which pertains to its eligibility to receive federal financial assistance for rail projects. DOTD is the designated rail authority to distribute federal funding for rail projects in the state.

1.7.1.1 Louisiana Transportation Trust Fund

The Louisiana Transportation Trust Fund (TTF) was established in 1990. The TTF is the main funding source used to meet the state's transportation needs and is funded through the state's gas tax and other associated fees. Although the fund does not include eligibility for rail projects, highway-related uses such as grade crossing eliminations and providing the matching share for federal grade crossing improvement funding are eligible uses. Act 441 § 388.1 states that TTF money may be used for administrative expenses to promulgate rules and regulations for implementing the Short Line Railroad Infrastructure Improvement Program.

Short Line Railroad Infrastructure Improvement Program

Title 48 § 388.1 USC, passed in 2019, allows the DOTD to establish a rail assistance program to assist the state's smaller railroads in implementing rail improvements. Program funding is available to Class II and Class III railroads for projects that maintain efficient service on the rail network and those that implement recommendations in the Louisiana Freight Mobility Plan and State Rail Plan.

Eligible projects include but are not limited to:

- Track, equipment, signaling, and right-of-way acquisition and preservation;
- Rail line relocation and improvement;
- Multimodal connector enhancements and supporting facilities;
- Highway-rail grade crossing and associated equipment improvements; and
- Planning, engineering, and design for selected projects.

Funding for the Short Line Railroad Infrastructure Improvement Program is subject to availability of funds, a comparative needs analysis of requested projects as determined by the

department, and demonstrable public benefits to be achieved by the project. The initial round of funding, announced in November 2022, totaled $3 million. Historically, requests have ranged from $5 to $25 million to meet the needs of the state's short line railroads.

Projects selected for this program require a minimum of 50% matching funds from sources other than the state's TTF. Under Act 441, DOTD is authorized to compete for, receive, accept, administer, and manage federal and other funds in furtherance of this program.

In November 2022, DOTD announced the inaugural projects to receive funding through the Short Line Railroad Infrastructure Improvement Program. Project funding was awarded to the NOPB to construct the NOPB Transloading Industrial Park in New Orleans East, and WATCO's Louisiana Southern Railroad (LAS) for track, rail, and bridge upgrades between Hodge and Gibsland in North Louisiana. These improvements will increase fluidity and modernize the respective rail networks, support commerce and the supply chain, while also increasing the resiliency needed to combat climate change issues.[8]

1.7.1.2 Parish Transportation Fund

The Parish Transportation Fund (PTF) was established in 1990 (RS 48:751 – 762) with the express purpose of providing funding for the maintenance, construction, and repair of parish road systems. Funding is disbursed to parish authorities according to a distribution formula. Facilities eligible for PTF funding are limited to parish or municipally constructed or maintained roads as well as causeways, dykes, dams, and levees. Like the TTF, PTF funding is not permitted for railroad-specific projects but can be used toward highway-rail crossing improvements.

1.7.1.3 Port Construction and Development Priority Program

The Port Construction and Development Priority Program was created by Act 452 in 1989 and is administered by DOTD's Office of Multimodal Commerce. The purpose of this priority program is to allocate state funds to port projects with the highest prospects of success as determined by objective standards such as technical and financial feasibility and overall impacts. The program specifically emphasizes the need to equitably distribute state funds and to avoid duplication of port infrastructure. A rigorous analysis of forecasted project benefits is undertaken to ensure that project impacts are positive and beneficial to the state.

Rail components are an eligible project cost under this program. To be eligible for funding, a port authority must apply for consideration. These applications are reviewed, evaluated, and prioritized by DOTD. As allowed by statute, DOTD contracts with the National Ports and

[8] DOTD, *Announcements* webpage (accessed September 2023)

Waterways Institute for assistance with economic evaluation of these projects. The program requires a cost participation from the ports of 10% based on construction costs of the project.[9]

1.7.2 Rail Funding Levels

The DOTD Office of Multimodal Commerce's budget is largely funded through statutory dedications from TTF revenues from taxes on fuels and vehicle license fees. Expenditures in the 2021 – 2022 DOTD Executive Budget included $50,000 dedicated to the Office of Multimodal Commerce for passenger rail station development.[10] Many rail projects rely on the State's capital outlay process to get funded. **Table 5** shows recent rail initiatives that have received capital outlay funding.

Table 5: Recent Capital Outlay Dedications

Year	Amount	Purpose
2019	$3,000,000	New Orleans Rail Gateway Environmental Study
2020	$3,000,000	Short Line Railroad Infrastructure Improvement Program
2023	$6,000,000	Short Line Railroad Infrastructure Improvement Program

Source: DOTD Office of Multimodal Commerce

In addition to the funding mechanisms described above, other state resources have been used to improve rail in Louisiana, such as matching funds for federal grants.

1.7.3 Federal Aid Programs

DOTD relies on federal aid for large rail infrastructure projects and planning efforts that cannot be adequately supported through the funding programs described above. U.S. DOT, through the FRA and the Office of the Secretary, administers a series of rail-specific programs designed to enhance rail transportation across the U.S., including those provided in **Table 6**.

[9] DOTD, *Port Construction and Development Priority Program* webpage (accessed September 2023)
[10] Louisiana Division of Administration, *FY 2021-2022 Executive Budget* (accessed October 2023)

Table 6: FRA Grant Programs

Program Title	Description
Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI)	Funds capital projects that improve freight and passenger rail safety, efficiency, and reliability
Corridor Identification and Development Program (CIDP)	Guides the development of new and enhanced intercity passenger rail services.
Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE)	Funding for road, rail, transit, and port improvements.
Restoration and Enhancement (R&E)	Operating assistance grants for initiating, restoring, or enhancing intercity passenger rail.
Rail Crossing Elimination (RCE)	Provides funding for highway-rail or pathway-rail grade crossing improvement projects.

Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) is a major grant program targeted at improving the safety and efficiency of the nation's rail network. In February 2019, Louisiana was awarded funds through the FRA's Restoration and Enhancement (R&E) grant program (FY 2017) to advance efforts to establish a twice daily intercity passenger rail service between Mobile, Alabama, and New Orleans. The grant combines 20 projects in Alabama, Louisiana, and Mississippi, as well as improves grade crossings and funds construction of a station in Mobile. Additional federal grant funding has been pursued since this initial award to undertake further improvements. Program funds would be administered by the Office of Multimodal Commerce.

1.7.3.1 Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act

In November 2021, the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) was passed into law. Nearly $6 billion from the IIJA is slated to the state to advance several much-needed major projects. From 2021 through 2025, Louisiana will benefit from this infrastructure package to rebuild roads and bridges, strengthen the electric grid and broadband, add levee protection, improve flood resiliency, and help the multimodal system including ports and rail. With this funding, DOTD will be able to close the gap in funding on major projects and implement more projects to help slow the backlog of growing needs.[11]

The IIJA is the largest investment in passenger rail since the creation of Amtrak. Louisiana will be eligible to compete for $10 billion in rail improvement and safety grants and $5.5 billion in grade crossing safety improvements.[12] In June 2023, Amtrak applied for funding through two FRA programs funded by the IIJA, the Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail (FSP) Program and the Corridor Identification and Development Program (CIDP). One project

[11] DOTD, *Announcements* webpage (accessed September 2023)
[12] U.S. DOT, *The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Will Deliver for Louisiana* webpage (accessed September 2023)

included in the proposal is the I-20 Crescent service extension from Mississippi through Louisiana to Texas.[13] Additional active projects underway or in development in Louisiana are discussed in **Section 1.8.4.2**.

1.8 Overview of Rail Initiatives in Louisiana

1.8.1 Active Freight Rail Initiatives

DOTD-involved rail initiatives include:

- New Orleans Rail Gateway Study: The purpose of this study is to identify a route alternative through the New Orleans region that would mitigate choke points, most notably at the region's many at-grade crossings, to improve the efficiency and reliability of rail service on NOPB and the six Class I rail carriers and three intercity Amtrak passenger routes operating in the region. Concerns over rail congestion in the New Orleans area date back prior to 1975 when DOTD published the first study aimed at increasing capacity. Current collaborative efforts between DOTD and the New Orleans Regional Planning Commission (NORPC) reached an impasse when the lack of public consensus warranted a further evaluation of rail traffic projections and improvement alternatives. There are two current studies underway as part of the Gateway:
    - Jefferson Highway Rail Crossing Relocation Study: DOTD and FRA, in coordination with NORPC and the railroads operating in the New Orleans metropolitan area, are preparing an Environmental Assessment (EA) for improvements to the two at-grade highway-rail crossings located along Jefferson Highway (US 90) in Jefferson Parish. The study is evaluating the consolidation of these crossings into a single crossing and possible grade separation.
    - Avondale Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study: DOTD, in coordination with FRA, FHWA, NORPC, and railroads operating in the New Orleans metropolitan area are conducting a PEL study to evaluate the feasibility of closing the Union Pacific Railroad (UP) and BNSF Railway roadway-rail at-grade crossings at Live Oak Boulevard, Willswood Lane, George Street, and Avondale Garden Road and replacing them with one or more grade separations.

[13] Amtrak, *Media Center* webpage (accessed September 2023)

- New Orleans Public Belt Railroad (NOPB) Transloading Industrial Park: This project will advance construction of a new transloading industrial park in New Orleans East that will accommodate facilities allowing shippers to interchange freight between truck and rail. The intermodal highway-rail improvements in the New Orleans region will bolster the regional economy by improving freight services for existing businesses and attracting new industries to the area. $1.5 million was awarded to the project by DOTD in the initial announcement of funding from the Short Line Railroad Infrastructure Improvement Program.
- Railroad Crossing Improvements (various locations statewide): DOTD is constantly planning and implementing railroad crossing projects. These improvements are funded through a combination of Federal Rail Highway Crossings Program (Section 130), Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP), state TTF dollars, and local funding.

DOTD's Short Line Railroad Infrastructure Improvement Program

DOTD is committed to improving Louisiana's rail infrastructure. Its Short Line Railroad Improvement Program offers grants to Class II and III railroads to support track, rail and bridge upgrades, support transloading and rail access, and increase rail cars moving throughout the state and ports. Projects selected require a 50% match. Current projects that have been funded include the construction of NOPB Transloading Industrial Park in New Orleans East, and establishing a new rail connection to UP for the Port of Caddo-Bossier.

1.8.1.1 Other Freight Rail Initiatives Within the State

NOPB is advancing an improvement project to address congestion on the New Orleans Gateway. The New Orleans Gateway Rail Fluidity and Capacity Improvements Project entails the construction of additional railyard space and deploying automated switching technology, improving NOPB's ability to switch, interchange, and store cars. Proposed improvements across the New Orleans region would enhance the capacity and reliability of rail services for the efficient interchange of freight. Up to $7.29 million was awarded to the project in 2020 under the FRA's CRISI grant program.

A recently completed project by Louisiana Southern (LAS) to perform track, rail, and bridge upgrades in rural north Louisiana (Hodge to Gibsland) concluded in 2023. This undertaking modernized LAS infrastructure to meet current and future needs including the ability to accommodate heavier and longer trains. The improvements help retain area industries shipping varied commodities such as paper products, aggregates, oils, and consumer products. $1.5 million was awarded to the project by DOTD through the Short Line Railroad Infrastructure Improvement Program.

1.8.2 Active Passenger Rail Initiatives

Louisiana has several ongoing passenger rail initiatives in varied stages of development:

- Baton Rouge to New Orleans Corridor: Project envisions twice-daily trips with stops in Baton Rouge (downtown and/or Health District), Gonzales, LaPlace, Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport, and the Union Passenger in downtown New Orleans. Since discontinuation of service along this corridor in 1969, many local, regional, and state entities have vied to reinstate rail travel between the state's most-populated metropolitan areas. In 2022, a $20 million U.S. DOT RAISE grant was secured for right-of-way acquisition, design, and construction of the Baton Rouge and Gonzales train stations and supporting infrastructure. A feasibility study conducted in 2014 was updated in October 2023 to include the latest cost and ridership projections. Funding sought in recent years for this project is discussed in **Section 1.8.4.2**.
- Gulf Coast Corridor: Ongoing project advanced by the Southern Rail Commission (SRC) (detailed in **Section 1.8.4.1**) to re-establish passenger rail service between New Orleans and Mobile, Alabama which was suspended along with other services following devastation of rail infrastructure due to Hurricane Katrina. Initial twice-daily round trips between New Orleans and Mobile are expected to launch in early 2025. Additional service, including an extension east towards Florida, remains under consideration.
- I-20 Corridor: Passenger rail along the I-20 corridor in North Louisiana is currently in the planning phase. The service would be an extension of the popular Amtrak Crescent train which currently terminates in New Orleans. This extension would connect major metropolitan areas such as New York, Atlanta, and Dallas/Fort Worth and expand access to passenger rail to communities without a current connection including Monroe and Shreveport. The SRC was awarded up to $500,000 in CIDP funding in FY 2022 to develop a scope, schedule, and cost estimate for preparing a service development plan for the corridor.

1.8.3 Local Rail Planning

Louisiana MPOs plan and prioritize local and regional transportation projects. Each MPO is required to maintain a multi-year program of transportation projects within a Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and a Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP). Each TIP must cite all federally funded projects within each MPO's boundaries. Other planning documents produced by MPOs include freight plans and mobility plans specific to their respective areas.

Recent planning activities led by the New Orleans Regional Planning Commission (NORPC), as shared in its 2020 – 2021 freight profile,[14] include:

- New Orleans Rail Gateway Study: Conducted in partnership with DOTD to mitigate rail bottlenecks and congestion while improving safety in and near New Orleans.
- LA 23 Rail Relocation Study: Evaluation of potential rail alignments for the relocation of approximately one-half mile of New Orleans Gulf Coast (NOGC) track located within the street right-of-way in the City of Gretna.

NORPC led creation of the 2022 New Orleans Regional Freight Mobility Plan which recommends a study to evaluate highway and rail capacity to and from the Louisiana International Terminal. The plan also calls for an in-depth study of freight data to inform strategies for diverting freight away from highways and achieving a more balanced modal split.

Additionally, Lake Charles MPO is currently working on the Southwest Louisiana Marion "Butch" Fox Rail Study and Plan—a comprehensive rail plan and study. The study focuses on rail development in Louisiana's Planning District 5, and is currently under review for final editing and Board consideration in the Fall of 2024.

1.8.4 National and Regional Planning

In October 2008, PRIIA was enacted and the Administrator of the FRA was directed to "develop a long-range national rail plan consistent with approved state rail plans and the rail needs of the Nation as determined by the Secretary in order to promote an integrated, cohesive, efficient, and optimized national rail system for the movement of goods and people[.]" Objectives of the plan include:

- Increasing passenger and freight rail performance,
- Integrating all transportation modes to form a more complementary transportation system,
- Identifying projects of national significance, and
- Providing increased public awareness.

Louisiana will coordinate the SRP with the National Rail Plan and Freight Network, and U.S. Military Surface Deployment and Distribution Command's Transportation Engineering Agency.

More recently under IIJA in 2021, the FRA was directed to conduct an Amtrak Daily Long-Distance Service Study "to evaluate the restoration of daily long-distance intercity rail

[14] New Orleans Reginal Planning Commission, *2020-2021 Regional Planning Commission Freight Profile*

passenger service and the potential for new Amtrak long-distance routes." The overall objective is to create a long-term vision for long-distance passenger rail service and identify capital projects and funding needed to implement that vision. The study, currently underway, involves assessment of the restoration of daily intercity rail passenger service along any Amtrak long-distance routes that were discontinued, as well as any Amtrak long-distance routes with nondaily service. Several intercity routes in Louisiana will be part of this study.

1.8.4.1 Southern Rail Commission

The Southern Rail Commission (SRC) was enabled by an act of Congress in 1982, P. L. 97-213 which enabled the formation of an Interstate Rail Compact. Comprised of representatives from Alabama, Louisiana, and Mississippi, the SRC's aim is to advance rail initiatives in the southeast. SRC, in conjunction with Amtrak, was awarded up to $178 million in September 2023 through FRAs CRISI Grant Program to advance project development, design, and construction for various track, signal, and station improvements necessary to reinstate passenger rail service on the Gulf Coast corridor between New Orleans and Mobile. Most project work is proposed to occur in Mississippi but will eventually benefit the New Orleans region through reinstated passenger service.

In March 2023, the SRC also applied for the FRA CIDP, funded by the IIJA, to officially recognize two intercity passenger rail routes for route planning: Gulf Coast (New Orleans to Mobile) and I-20 corridor (Texas to Alabama via I-20 corridor). Both projects were awarded up to $500,000 to be used toward planning and engineering necessary to advance these corridors. In addition to these projects advanced under the IIJA, the SRC also seeks to re-establish passenger service between Birmingham and Mobile, where it would connect with the Gulf Coast Corridor.

In 2016, the SRC secured $2 million in FRA funding, $375,000 of which was allocated to Louisiana rail stations. $250,000 went toward the detailed planning of downtown and suburban station locations in Baton Rouge. Funds also supported rail station planning efforts in Gonzales and St. John Parish. In 2021 the SRC administered additional FRA funding for rail station improvements in Birmingham, Alabama and Gulfport, Pascagoula, and Bay St. Louis, Mississippi.

1.8.4.2 Recent Rail Initiatives Seeking Federal Funding

This section provides an overview of recent projects that have sought federal funding. Tens of millions of dollars have been awarded to rail projects in Louisiana in recent years through the IIJA. Hundreds of millions more have been allocated in neighboring states or will be made available to Louisiana projects in coming years. **Table 7** shows recent applications submitted for Louisiana projects to federal programs that were introduced in **Section 1.7.3**.

Table 7: Recently Awarded Louisiana Project Grant Applications

Program	Project/Corridor	Year	Funding Request	Applicant
CIDP	New Orleans to Baton Rouge Passenger Rail	2023	$0.5M	DOTD
	Gulf Coast Passenger Rail	2023	$0.5M	SRC
	Daily Sunset Limited Service	2023	$0.5M	Amtrak
	I-20 Corridor Intercity Passenger Rail	2023	$0.5M	SRC
CRISI	The Rural Louisiana Short Line Rail Modernization Initiative	2022	$16.8M	LAS
	Mississippi-Louisiana Grade Crossing Improvement	2022	$1.8M	Amtrak
	Beaumont Subdivision Corridor Railroad Crossing Safety Improvements	2020	$3.9M	DOTD
	NOGC Safety and Infrastructure Improvements	2020	$8.3M	NOGC
	New Orleans Gateway Rail Fluidity and Capacity Improvements	2019	$7.3M	NOPB
RAISE	Downtown Baton Rouge and Gonzales Train Stations	2022	$20.M	City of Gonzales

Source: FRA

Louisiana projects, separated by federal grant program, are further defined below.

Corridor Identification and Development (CIDP) and Federal-State Partnership Grant Programs

After closing of the 2022 RCE and CRISI grant application terms, the FRA decided to reframe its approach to intercity passenger rail funding. To this end, the CIDP was established to support planning for both new and existing corridors by sponsors to complete a passenger rail network that would serve cities across the U.S. Once these connecting corridors are established, the Federal State Partnership Grant Program for Intercity Passenger Rail (FSP National) will provide capital funds for implementation. Grant applications were submitted to both programs.

CIDP grants for up to $500,000 were awarded to initiate development of new services on the New Orleans to Baton Rouge corridor, the Gulf Coast corridor between New Orleans and Mobile, and the I-20 corridor between Dallas, Texas, and Meridian, Mississippi. These latter two corridors were submitted by the SRC with the New Orleans-Baton Rouge service submitted by DOTD. The CIDP program has also awarded up to $500,000 to Amtrak for efforts to pursue increasing the frequency of the Sunset Limited service from thrice-weekly trips to once-daily service.

Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvement (CRISI) Grant

Fiscal Year 2023

Two Louisiana projects were submitted by DOTD to the CRISI program under the 2023 solicitation, neither of which were selected for federal assistance at that time. These projects

were an extensive rehabilitation of the Bonnet Carré Spillway Bridge and advancing efforts to establishing passenger rail service along the I-20 corridor in North Louisiana. A $52 million grant was awarded to the Town of Gloster, Mississippi for the reestablishment of freight rail service along a 35-mile segment of the Gloster Southern Railroad that will serve businesses in Mississippi and Louisiana. DOTD is a funding partner for this effort.

Currently, speeds on the Canadian Pacific Kansas City (CPKC) Bonnet Carré Spillway Bridge are limited to 10 mph. This limits the efficient movement of freight and increases travel time for passenger rail between New Orleans and Baton Rouge. Replacement of timber piles on the Spillway Bridge is necessary to increase the permitted speed and improve safety for both cargo and future passengers. Because the Bonnet Carré Spillway Bridge crosses a federal project and several sensitive ecosystems, cooperation with the USACE and other agencies is necessary to secure permissions to replace the bridge. DOTD has proactively addressed this issue by contracting for necessary environmental reviews for the entire corridor to improve the likelihood of receiving discretionary grant awards for discrete projects between New Orleans and Baton Rouge. DOTD will continue to pursue this important project moving forward. State support may involve applying for federal competitive grant programs such as CRISI, pursuing other outside funding opportunities, or identifying internal funding.

Efforts to introduce passenger rail in northern Louisiana were also unsuccessful in receiving funding through the CRISI program in fiscal year 2023. The purpose of this initiative was to enhance intercity passenger rail between Dallas-Fort Worth and Meridian, parallel to I-20. The proposed rail line would create a critical connection across Louisiana to long-distance rail service from Texas to Chicago, New Orleans to Chicago, and New Orleans to Washington D.C. Eventually, an extension of this east-west service would be built to Atlanta. Although the corridor did not receive CRISI funding, it was, however, selected for award under the FRA's CIDP program later in 2023.

Fiscal Year 2022

The Rural Louisiana Short Line Rail Modernization Initiative

The proposed project involves final design and construction activities for various LAS track-related improvements, repairs, replacement of certain bridges and culverts, and grade crossing upgrades. The project aligns with the selection criteria by enhancing safety and ability to meet existing and anticipated demand as it will improve LAS's mainline by increasing safety standards on a rail corridor that transports hazmat loads, eliminating operating capacity inefficiencies (e.g., increasing load carrying capacity to 286,000 pounds), and increasing resiliency. The project will also help eliminate blocked crossing occurrences near a medical facility. LAS, along with CPKC as project partner, will contribute funds totaling a 20% non-Federal match. This project qualifies for the statutory set-aside for projects in Rural Areas.

Mississippi-Louisiana Grade Crossing Improvement Project

The proposed project involves systems planning activities for a corridor study that will evaluate the safety, roadway connectivity, reliability, and potential improvements, including but not limited to trespassing prevention measures, to 395 highway-rail grade crossings on Amtrak's City of New Orleans route through Mississippi and Louisiana. In partnership with Canadian National Railroad (CN) and the states of Louisiana and Mississippi, Amtrak will conduct the study and prioritize grade crossings to be improved, among other related tasks. The project aligns with the selection criteria by improving system and service performance and safety as it will facilitate safety improvements along this corridor that will also improve reliability of the service. Amtrak will provide a 20% non-Federal match. This project qualifies for the statutory set-asides for projects in Rural Areas, new Intercity Passenger Rail, and trespass prevention.

Fiscal Year 2020

Beaumont Subdivision Corridor Railroad Crossing Safety Improvements Project

This project was submitted by DOTD for purposes of funding the installation of predictive warning time systems with flashing lights, gate arms, and upgraded motion detectors at approximately 24 crossings along a 157-mile rail corridor on what was, at the time of the grant application, Kansas City Southern's (KCS) Beaumont Subdivision between Frierson and Starks, Louisiana. In addition, the project will close four crossings with low roadway traffic volumes. The corridor averages fourteen trains a day, 79% of which carry hazardous products. The project aims to reduce the potential for grade crossing collisions between trains and roadway users, and to provide more consistent crossing signal activation times. As of January 2024, DOTD plans to gate 23 crossings. Three crossings have been completed and one is planned to be modified to a pedestrian crossing in DeRidder (still under review). In addition, one crossing has been closed and three are to be closed in 2024.

New Orleans & Gulf Coast Railway Company (NOGC) Safety and Infrastructure Improvements

This project improves approximately 24 miles of the NOGC-owned Belle Chasse Subdivision and eight miles of the leased Westwego Subdivision from UP along the Mississippi River in the Orleans and Delta region. Rehabilitation work includes repair of two railroad lift bridges, replacement of embedded rail on a neighborhood road, establishing double-main trackage from single-mainline track, a tie replacement program, and first responder hazardous materials emergency response training. To date, the NOGC has completed the tie replacement project and has performed two of three annual hazardous material and emergency training sessions for local first responders. Pre-construction activities for the replacement of embedded track in Gretna, Louisiana, and double-main trackage has started and construction will be underway in 2024. Work on the two lift bridges will also begin in 2024, with all projects complete in 2025. The final Hazardous Responder Training session was held February 2024.

Fiscal Year 2019

New Orleans Gateway Rail Fluidity and Capacity Improvements

Applied for by NOPB, this project will upgrade the NOPB main classification yard – Cotton Warehouse Yard – from manual to power switches and expand three regional yards to provide capacity for storage and switching of additional rail cars.

Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Grants

Fiscal Year 2022

Downtown Baton Rouge and Gonzales Train Station Project

This capital project was applied for by the City of Gonzales, which will be used to fund right-of-way acquisition, design, and construction of the Baton Rouge Downtown Train Station and the Gonzales Train Station along the planned Baton Rouge-New Orleans intercity passenger rail corridor. Stations will incorporate ADA accessible platforms, station buildings, and supporting infrastructure.

Rail Crossing Elimination (RCE) Grant Program

Fiscal Year 2022

New Orleans to Baton Rouge Rail Crossing Improvements

A federal share of $7.9 million was requested through the RCE program for the New Orleans to Baton Rouge Multi-Crossing Safety Project. Applying for this grant required the review of 155 railroad crossings on the CPKC rail line between Baton Rouge and New Orleans to determine what kind of safety and security upgrades would be required. Forty-six crossings were identified as needing improvement. A cost estimate was prepared yielding a total project cost of $7.9 million. A benefit/cost analysis for the project resulted in a benefit/cost ratio of 1.6. The grant was not awarded but components of the project are being actively pursued.

Additional projects were submitted in 2022 by the City of Baton Rouge/Parish of East Baton Rouge, West Baton Rouge Parish, and the NOPBC.

2.0 Louisiana's Existing Rail System & Use

This chapter will provide an overview and inventory of the State's existing rail system as a baseline for planning and decision making, describe the historic trends and forecasts that impact the need for rail in the State, and start to identify the gaps, needs, and opportunities for passenger and freight rail service in Louisiana.

2.1 Freight Rail

Louisiana's rail network is a vital component of the national freight and passenger rail system. The statewide rail system consists of 2,667 freight railroad route miles and eight miles of track dedicated solely to accommodating Louisiana's three passenger rail services (discussed further in **Section 2.4.1**). The rail network is owned and operated by 21 freight railroads according to the North American Rail Network (NARN)[15] data analyzed for and reported throughout this plan.[16] Freight railroad mileage is shown in **Table 8**.

Railroads active in the state range in size from large national rail carriers, known as Class I railroads, to small local railroads. All six U.S. Class I railroads operate in Louisiana. These national rail carriers are joined by 15 short line railroads which provide an array of functions necessary to connect industries across the state to suppliers and customers across North America. The distinction between these types of railroads is detailed in the following sections. Railroad owners are shown in **Figure 1**.

[15] Federal Railroad Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS) National Transportation Atlas Database (NTAD) North American Rail Network (NARN) Updated (January 13, 2023)
[16] Tabulation of rail mileage totals based on mileage of main lead track actively in operation within Louisiana.

Table 8: Freight Railroad Mileage in Louisiana

Railroad	Reporting Mark	Route Miles Operated		
		Owned*	Trackage Rights	Total
Class I Railroads				
BNSF Railway Company	BNSF	200	152	352
Canadian National Railway Company	CN	238	19	257
CSX Transportation	CSXT	35	17	52
CPKC Railway	CPKC	736	166	902
Norfolk Southern Railway	NS	72	194	266
Union Pacific Railroad	UP	893	232	1,125
Short Line, Switching, and Terminal Railroads				
Acadiana Railway	AKDN	59	26	85
Arkansas, Louisiana & Mississippi Railroad	ALM	40	2	42
Baton Rouge Southern Railroad	BRS	**	0	N/A
Bogalusa Bayou Railroad	BBAY	**	0	N/A
Delta Southern Railroad	DSRR	44	<1	45
Dutchtown Southern Railroad	DUSR	**	0	N/A
Geaux Geaux Railroad	GOGR	12	5	17
Louisiana Southern Railroad	LAS	129	22	151
Louisiana & Delta Railroad	LDRR	72	106	178
Louisiana & North West Railroad	LNW	38	1	39
North Louisiana & Arkansas Railroad	NLA	20	0	20
New Orleans & Gulf Coast Railway	NOGC	31	0	31
New Orleans Public Belt Railroad	NOPB	25	5	30
Port Rail, Inc.	PRI	**	0	N/A
Timber Rock Railroad	TIBR	22	0	22
Total Mileage		**2,667**	**947**	**3,614**

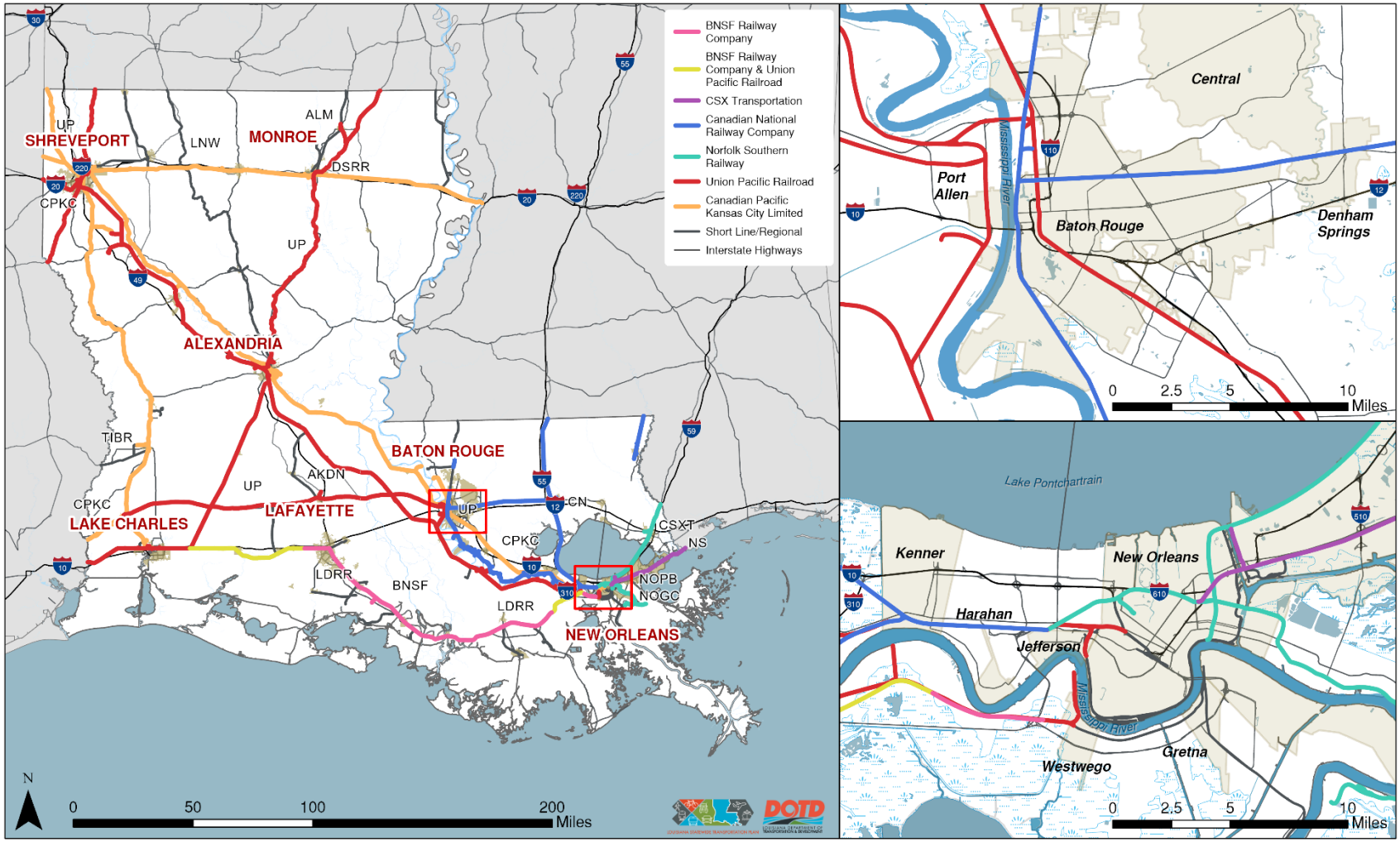
Source: Federal Railroad Administration, USDOT Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS).

Note: Values might not add to totals due to rounding. Route miles owned encompasses all track identified in the North American Rail Network (NARN) data as "main lead". Rail owned and operated does not reflect other track types including major industrial leads, non-mainline active track, passing siding, and yard tracks.

**Owned mileage includes Main Lead track where the railroad is listed as a secondary owner. This applies to 72 track miles on the following railroads: BNSF, CN, UP, and NOPB. Shared ownership of mainline track is detailed in the railroad profiles in Section 2.1.*

*** These railroads own/operate upon track in Louisiana, none of which is mainline track which is presented here as route miles.*

Figure 1: Louisiana Rail System



Source: Federal Railroad Administration, USDOT Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS).

2.1.1 Class I Railroads

U.S. Class I Railroads are large line haul railroads with a total 2018 operating revenue of $490 million or more. All six Class I carriers converge in New Orleans via the Huey P. Long Bridge and NOPB. Class I railroads own 73% of Louisiana's 4,032 freight rail route miles. **Table** 9 shows route mileage owned by Class I railroads within Louisiana. All Class I infrastructure in the state can handle 286,000-pound (286k-lb.) carloads.

Table 9: Class I Rail Mileage in Louisiana

Railroad	Reporting Mark	Route Miles Owned	Route Miles Operated	Parent Company
BNSF Railway Company	BNSF	200	352	Berkshire Hathaway, Inc.
Canadian National Railway Company	CN	238	257	N/A*
CSX Transportation	CSXT	35	52	CSX Corporation
Canadian Pacific Kansas City	CPKC	736	902	N/A*
Norfolk Southern Railway	NS	72	266	Norfolk Southern Corp.
Union Pacific	UP	893	1,125	Union Pacific Corp.
Class I Mileage Total		**2,174**	**2,954**	

Source: Federal Railroad Administration, USDOT Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS).

Note: Route miles owned encompasses all track identified in the North American Rail Network (NARN) data as "main lead".

**CN and CPKC are not owned by a parent company*

Most train operations on lines owned by Class I railroads are controlled by Centralized Traffic Control (CTC) signaling systems. Some rail segments operated by CN and CPKC in Louisiana are unsignaled. CTC allows a centralized dispatcher remotely control signaling and train movements within a given area. By consolidating routing decisions and providing failsafe systems, CTC creates safer operating conditions for trains within a dispatch territory.

BNSF Railway Company (BNSF)

BNSF Railway Company (BNSF) operates across a 32,500-mile railway network in 28 U.S. states and three Canadian provinces. BNSF operates on 352 route miles in Louisiana. Approximately 200 miles are owned and maintained exclusively by BNSF while the remaining 152 miles are jointly owned with other railroads or operated through trackage rights agreements. The most notable shared route is between Duson and Iowa, LA which BNSF co-owns with UP. Freight using the joint trackage mainline can connect to all the Class I carriers in New Orleans by using the Huey P. Long Bridge and NOPB. BNSF operates an intermodal facility in Avondale, outside of New Orleans. Industrial shipments account for three-fourths of BNSF traffic out of Louisiana.

BNSF also transports agricultural products out of the state. BNSF has three short line connections throughout Louisiana that are identified in **Table 10**.

Table 10: BNSF Short Line Connections

Short Line	Reporting Mark	Connections
Acadiana Railway	AKDN	Crowley, Eunice, Opelousas, Bunkie
Louisiana & Delta Railroad	LDRR	Lafayette, Raceland
New Orleans Public Belt Railroad	NOPB	New Orleans

Source: Federal Railroad Administration, USDOT Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS).

Canadian National Railway Company (CN)

The Canadian National Railway Company's railroad network spans throughout the US and Canada, totaling more than 20,000 route miles[17]. In Louisiana, CN operates 257 route miles, consisting of both main lines and branch lines. CN also owns industrial lead track in, Bogalusa, Elmwood, Garyville, and Hammond. **Table** 11 summarizes CN routes in Louisiana.

Table 11: CN Routes

Routes	Description
Mississippi/Louisiana state border near Osyka to Kentwood via Hammond to New Orleans	North/South main track
New Orleans to Baton Rouge	East/West line
Hammond to Baton Rouge	East/West line
Baton Rouge north to Slaughter	North/South line
Slaughter west to Riddle Zee	Branch line (currently not in service)
Mississippi/Louisiana state border near Twin, MS south to Bogalusa	Branch line

Source: Federal Railroad Administration, USDOT Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS).

CSX Transportation (CSXT)

CSXT is a publicly traded railroad company that operates 20,000 route miles of track in eastern, southern, and Midwestern U.S. In Louisiana, CSXT operates 52 miles of track, 35 miles that they own and 17 miles of trackage rights, primarily in New Orleans. Most rail that moves west on CSXT's network needs to move through Louisiana, primarily using the Gentilly rail yard. CSXT has one short line connection in Louisiana in New Orleans where it interchanges with New Orleans Public Belt Railroad.

Canadian Pacific Kansas City (CPKC)

Canadian Pacific Kansas City Limited was established in 2023 when Canadian Pacific Railway merged with Kansas City Southern. CPKC now operates 20,000 route miles throughout the U.S.,

[17] North American Rail Network Lines - CN

Canada, and Mexico. In Louisiana, CPKC operates 902 route miles, owning 736 miles and retaining trackage rights to 166 miles, in addition to industrial lead track in Baton Rouge, Ludington, and De Soto Parish servicing the Mansfield Paper Mill. CPKC is seeing the most customer growth on its North/South line and is investing in extensions between Beaumont and Shreveport. **Table 12** identifies the routes operated by CPKC in Louisiana.

Table 12: CPKC Routes

Routes	Description
Lake Charles via De Quincy and DeRidder to Shreveport	North/South line
New Orleans via Baton Rouge, Shreveport and northward to Kansas City	Northwest line
Meridian, MS to Dallas, TX via Vicksburg, Mississippi, Monroe, and Shreveport	East/West line
Baton Rouge to Port Hudson	Branch line

Source: Federal Railroad Administration, USDOT Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS).

CPKC serves multiple ports in Louisiana including New Orleans, Baton Rouge, Lake Charles, and Natchitoches. CPCK's Class I railroad connections are listed in **Table 13**.

Table 13: CPKC Class I Connections

Railroad	Connection
BNSF	Lake Charles and New Orleans via NOPB
CN	New Orleans and Baton Rouge
CSXT	New Orleans
NS	New Orleans
UP	New Orleans, Baton Rouge, Lake Charles, Shreveport, Monroe, and Alexandria

Source: Federal Railroad Administration, USDOT Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS).

Norfolk Southern (NS)

Norfolk Southern Railway is a publicly traded railroad company owned by the Norfolk Southern Corporation. NS operates over 21,000 route miles in 22 states, primarily east of the Mississippi River, with some routes stretching west to Des Moines, Kansas City, and Dallas. In Louisiana, NS operates 266 miles of track, owning 72 miles and maintaining trackage rights on 194 miles. NS serves the port of New Orleans and connects with all the Class I carriers in New Orleans (BNSF, CN, CSX, CPKC, and UP). NS also interchanges traffic with NOPB.

Union Pacific (UP)

Union Pacific Railroad is a publicly traded railroad company and wholly owned subsidiary of Union Pacific Corporation that operates over 32,000 route miles in 23 states west of New Orleans and Chicago. In Louisiana, UP operates 1,125 route miles of track all west of the Mississippi River. UP owns 893 miles of track, including joint ownership of 240 miles with BNSF.

2.1.2 Short Line Railroads by Owner

A Short Line railroad is a small to mid-size railroad company that operates over shorter distances relative to larger, national railroad networks. The designation is inclusive of switching and terminal railroads that provide services including railcar storage, building trains, dispatching trains, and other rail yard functions. These railroads (shown in **Table** 14) play an important role in the rail network as they connect shippers with the larger freight rail network. Many short line railroads operate lines that have been spun off or abandoned by Class I carriers. Unlike Class I carriers, not all short-line railroads in the state can accommodate the loaded car weights of 286k-lbs.

Table 14: Route Mileage of Short Line Railroads with Mainline Track

Railroad	Reporting Mark	Route Miles Owned	Route Miles Operated	Parent Company
Acadiana Railway	AKDN	59	85	Trac-Work Inc
Arkansas, Louisiana & Mississippi Railroad	ALM	40	42	Genesee & Wyoming Company
Delta Southern Railroad	DSRR	44	45	Patriot Rail Company
Geaux Geaux Railroad	GOGR	12	17	Watco
Louisiana Southern Railroad	LAS	129	151	Watco
Louisiana & Delta Railroad	LDRR	72	178	Genesee & Wyoming Company
Louisiana & North West Railroad	LNW	38	39	Patriot Rail Company
North Louisiana & Arkansas Railroad	NLA	20	20	Arkansas Shortline Railroads, Inc.
New Orleans & Gulf Coast Railway	NOGC	31	31	Rio Grande Pacific Corp.
New Orleans Public Belt Railroad	NOPB	25	30	Port of New Orleans
Timber Rock Railroad	TIBR	22	22	Watco
Short Line Mileage Total		**492**	**660**	

Source: Federal Railroad Administration, USDOT Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS).
Note: Route miles owned encompasses all track identified in the North American Rail Network (NARN) data as "main lead".

In addition to the Short Line railroads above which traverse varying distances to accommodate line-haul movements, four additional railroads without mainline track are active in Louisiana. Route mileage reported in this plan is inclusive to mainline track. The type of rail infrastructure owned by these railroads is presented in **Table 15**.

Table 15: Short Line Railroads without Mainline Track

Railroad	Reporting Mark	Non-Mainline Rail Owned	Parent Company
Baton Rouge Southern Railroad	BRS	Non-mainline active track*	Watco
Bogalusa Bayou Railroad	BBAY	Yard track	Rio Grande Pacific Corp.
Dutchtown Southern Railroad	DUSR	N/A**	Watco
Port Rail Inc.	PRI	Non-mainline active track, major industrial lead track	Port Rail, Inc (Lake Charles Harbor District)

Source: Federal Railroad Administration, USDOT Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS).

Note: In addition to the short line railroads shown in this table, non-mainline active track and industrial lead track is owned by the United States government at Camp Minden and Fort Johnson.

** All BRS track is co-owned with CPKC.*

***DUSR operates entirely on track leased from Illinois Central Railroad Company (IC), a non-operating subsidiary of CN.*

2.1.2.1 Port of New Orleans

New Orleans Public Belt Railroad (NOPB)

New Orleans Public Belt Railroad was acquired by the Port of New Orleans from the City of New Orleans in 2018. The railroad is now governed by the New Orleans Public Belt Board of Directors. The NOPB operates 30 route miles and other trackage and facilities including main track and passing slides, the Huey P. Long Bridge (4.4-mile, double track), and 85.5 miles of yard and industrial track. NOPB connects the Port of New Orleans to the Napoleon Avenue Container Terminal to provide intermodal switching services for CN. NOPB connects all six Class I railroads (BNSF, CN, CSX, CPKC, NS, and UP) and can accommodate 286k-lb. carloads.

2.1.2.2 Genesee & Wyoming

With operations in the U.S, Canada, and Europe, Genesee & Wyoming Inc. has a total of 116 freight railroads under its ownership. The company owns 112 route miles in Louisiana between two railroads: the Arkansas, Louisiana & Mississippi Railroad operates in northern Louisiana between Monroe and the Arkansas state line. Louisiana & Delta Railroad operates a branch line off the BNSF – UP corridor largely in the Lafayette region.

Arkansas, Louisiana & Mississippi Railroad (ALM)

ALM originates in Crossett, Arkansas, crosses into Louisiana near Geddie through Bastrop and extends 55 miles to Monroe operating a total of 42 miles in Louisiana. It interchanges with UP in Monroe and Collinston, with Monroe being the largest interchange point. Gross carload

weights of 286k-lbs. are permissible from milepost (MP) 0.0 to MP 4.0 in Monroe but limited to 263k-lbs. from MP 4.0 to MP 52.5. ALM transports over 600 carloads in Louisiana each year and typical commodities include chemicals, lumbar, paper, and forest products.

Louisiana & Delta Railroad (LDRR)

LDRR operates seven disconnected line segments that branch from the BNSF – UP joint trackage between Lafayette and Raceland. LDRR operates on 178 miles of track throughout Louisiana. Infrastructure owned by LDRR can only accommodate gross carload weights of 263k-lbs. Typical commodities transported include aggregates, brick and cement, carbon black, chemicals, food and feed products, forest products, oil products, pipe, steel and scrap. The seven branches are outlined in **Table 16** below:

Table 16: LDRR Branches

Branch	Description
Breaux Bridge Branch	Breaux Bridge Package with Breaux Bridge Branch, Lafayette Commercial Branch, Elks and Power House Spurs that fan out from Lafayette.
Midland Branch	New Iberia to Abbeville with Pesson and Avery Island Spurs
MOP Line	New Iberia
ARA Spur	Acadiana Regional Airport facilities in New Iberia
Cypremont Branch	Baldwin to Cypremont and Port of West St. Mary
Bayou Sale Branch	Bayou Sale to North Bend
Lockport Branch	Raceland to MP 1.7

Source: Genessee &Wyoming

2.1.2.3 Patriot Rail Company

Patriot Rail owns 32 short line railroads across 23 states, including two railroads operating a combined 82 miles of mainline track within Louisiana.

Delta Southern Railroad (DSRR)

DSRR operates two rail segments for a total of 45 miles. The DSRR interchanges with UP in Monroe, CPKC in in Tallulah, and NLA in Lake Providence. DSRR limits carload weights to 263k-lbs. on each of its segments. Primary commodities include agricultural products, chemical products, forest products, and clay.

Louisiana & North West Railroad (LNW)

LNW operates 68 miles between Gibsland and McNeil, Arkansas, 39 miles inside of Louisiana. The LNW has two interchange points, one in Gibsland with CPKC and the other in McNeil with UP. LNW provides transloading services in Gibsland, Athens, Mulnix, Homer, Haynesville, and Iron Bridge Road in Louisiana. Gross carload weights are limited to 263k-lbs but upgrades are underway to accommodate 286k-lbs. LNW provides car storage and locomotive repair services in Gibsland. Primary commodities include chemical products, wood, steel, and plastics.

2.1.2.4 Rio Grande Pacific Corporation

Bogalusa Bayou Railroad (BBAY)

Prior to 2021 BBAY operated one mile of track that serviced Bogalusa's International Paper Bulk Plant. In May of 2021, BBAY acquired Geaux Geaux Railroad (GOGR) and was subsequently sold to Rio Grande Pacific in May of 2023. GOGR remains part of Watco. BBAY's single mile of track is unable to accommodate 286k-lb. loads. The primary commodities moved by BBAY are paper products and calcinated coke.

New Orleans & Gulf Coast Railway (NOGC)

NOGC owns and operates 31 miles of railroad just outside of New Orleans on a former UP branch. It travels along the west bank of the Mississippi before interchanging with UP in Westwego. The NOGC is the only short line railroad that exists east of Avondale and services 20 switching and industrial customers. NOGC's main track operates eastward from Westwego to Harvey through Gretna to Gouldsboro Yard and then southward to Ironton. An expansion is planned to extend the line to the Kinder Morgan International Marine Terminal (IMT) in Myrtle Grove. NOGC has access to the Kinder Morgan Delta Terminal in Harvey and the Plaquemines Parish Port's Harbor and Terminal District south of Gouldsboro. The NOGC is a 10-mph unsignalized railroad capable of moving 286k-lbs carload weights. The NOGC primarily transports a variety of food products, oils, grains, petroleum products, chemicals, coal, and steel products.

2.1.2.5 Trac-Work Inc.

Acadiana Railway (AKDN)

AKDN owns 59 miles and operates 85 total miles of lines in Louisiana encompassing four segments: Opelousas to Bunkie (36.1 miles); a three-mile switching spur at Opelousas (formerly owned by Southern Pacific Railroad); the five-mile Thibodaux industrial lead at McCall; and a 21.6-mile track from Crowley to Eunice. The initial and final segments are connected by 20.9 miles of trackage rights on UP rail from Eunice to Opelousas. AKDN connects with UP at Bunkie, Opelousas, and Eunice and with BNSF at Crowley. The majority of AKDM tracks are limited to gross carload weights of up to 263k-lbs except for 2.5 miles in Opelousas where 286k-lbs carloads are permissible. Products primarily transported on these lines include agricultural products (primarily rice), edible oils, gravel, and general freight.

2.1.2.6 Watco

Geaux Geaux Railroad (GOGR)

GOGR operates mainline track north from Baton Rouge to Slaughter, with a branch line traveling west from Slaughter to the Hood Container facility in St. Francisville. All GOGR rail is capable of handling 286-lb. carloads. In 2021 GOGR was acquired by Watco which had been operating the railroad since 2018.

Louisiana Southern Railroad (LAS)

LAS operates 151 miles of tracks broken into three separate line segments: Shreveport to Bossier City East to Minden, Sibley to Springhill, Gibsland to Tioga and to Pineville Junction. LAS interchanges with CPKC at three stations: Gibsland, Pineville, and Sibley. It also interchanges with UP at Tioga and at Bossier City. LAS carload weight limits are limited to 263k-lbs but the goal is to complete an expansion to 286k-lbs on the northern and southern segments. The primary commodities transported are sand, chemicals, petroleum, metals, ores, and paper and forest products.

Timber Rock Railroad (TIBR)

TIBR operates 59 miles of track between Louisiana and Texas with 22 miles running from the Louisiana state line near Bon Wier, Texas to DeRidder. TIBR interchanges with CPKC at DeRidder and with BNSF at Silsbee and Tenaha, Texas. TIBR handles 263k-lbs car weights and the primary commodities moved are forest products and rock.

Baton Rouge Southern Railroad (BRS)

BRS began operating in 2008 and operates 2 miles of non-mainline track, interchanging with CPKS at the BSR owned Brooklawn Yard, about 8 miles north of Baton Rouge. BSR switches CPKS customers, offers car storage and provides transloading and car repair services. BRS handles 286k-lbs car loads and primarily transports plastic pellets and raw and calcinated coke.

Dutchtown Southern Railroad (DUSR)

DUSR operates 1.76 miles of non-main line track in Geismar, located about 20 miles southeast of Baton Rouge. This track is leased from CN and serves a cluster of nine petrochemical plants, moving approximately 35,000 freight cars per year. DUSR handles 286k-lbs car loads and primarily transports products for the chemical, gas, and energy industries.

2.1.2.7 Arkansas Shortline Railroads, Inc.

North Louisiana & Arkansas Railroad (NLA)

NLA operates over 62 miles of track from McGehee, Arkansas to Lake Providence, Louisiana, owning 24 miles and leasing 41 miles from the Lake Providence Port Authority Commission and Southeast Arkansas Economic Development District. NLA owns and operates 20 miles within Louisiana. It handles 286k-lbs car weights and primarily transports agricultural and industrial products.

2.1.2.8 Port Rail, Inc.

Port Rail, Inc. (PRI)

PRI, established in 2011, leases 2.3 miles of track from UP and 18 miles of track from the Lake Charles Harbor Terminal District (LCHTD). The remaining 16 miles of rail owned by LCHTD are operated by PRI through track usage agreements. PRI operates from the western terminus at the Port of Lake Charles City Docks to the Chennault area east of Lake Charles where it connects

with UP and BNSF. The primary commodities transported are agricultural products, coal, coke, and chemical products. PRI can accommodate 286k-lb. loads.

2.1.3 Abandonments

Rail abandonment is an official process overseen and permitted by the Surface Transportation Board (STB). This process is typically initiated when a track segment is burdensome to maintain and lightly trafficked or unused altogether. Abandonment requires adequate financial records be submitted to the STB as evidence of the claimed hardship created. The purpose of this process is to help ensure continued access for businesses along rail lines considered for abandonment. To maintain service, the law allows for the sale of the line to a "financially responsible" party to assume common carrier obligations. Alternately, rail carriers looking to abandon lines can be offered an "Offer of Financial Assistance", a subsidy to allow for continued service without a forced sale.

The STB also considers requests for trail use or public use conditions of the abandoned line to provide public benefit and preserve rail corridors for future use. the National Rails to Trails Act authorizes interested parties to negotiate agreements to use railroad right-of-way that otherwise would be abandoned for other public uses including highways, commuter rail service and recreational uses. When former rail right-of-way is used for trail purposes it is known as a rail-trail, denoting the transformation in the corridor's use.

In many cases, rail lines operated by short lines consist of infrastructure previously abandoned by larger railroads over time. Most abandonments have occurred since the 1980 passage of the Staggers Rail Act, federal legislation that removed many regulatory restraints on the rail industry.

Recently abandoned rail segments in Louisiana dating back to 2011 are shown in **Table 17.**

Table 17: Recently Abandoned Rail Segments

Railroad	Segment Location	Parish	Docket Number	Data Approved	Length
IC*	Covington	St. Tammany	AB-43-154X	10/3/2017	2.39 mi.
OUCH**	A point north of Junction City, AR to near Lillie	Union	AB-1122-0X	2/17/2015	13.4 mi.***
LDRR	Raceland to Jay	Lafourche	AB-318-7X	11/14/2011	12.5 mi.
Total					**28.29 mi.**

Source: Federal Railroad Administration, USDOT Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS). 2023 data.

** Illinois Central Railroad was active in Louisiana until 1998 when it was absorbed by CN. IC was the owner of record in 1992 when the STB decided to preserve the larger 29.14 corridor for rail banking. The 2017 decision allowed for the full abandonment of the 2.39-mile segment.*

*** Ouachita Railroad operated between El Dorado, AR and Lillie via Junction City prior to this abandonment. The discontinuation of this segment marks the end of OUCH operations in Louisiana.*

****Includes mileage abandoned in Arkansas.*

2.2 Intermodal Facilities

Intermodal freight, by its definition, necessitates the transfer from one mode of travel to another. Specialized intermodal facilities throughout the state accommodate such exchange of products and materials between rail, road, and port. While a viable option in some states, Louisiana does not have rail service connections to any of its airports.

2.2.1 Port-Rail Facilities

Port of South Louisiana

The Port of South Louisiana is a port district spanning 54 miles along the Mississippi River across St. Charles, St. John the Baptist, and St. James parishes. The district is serviced by CN and CPKC on the east bank and UP on the west bank. The Port of South Louisiana ranks first in the U.S. for tons of domestic cargo transported and second nationally for foreign trade.[18]

Port of New Orleans

The port of New Orleans is the only seaport in the U.S. served by six Class I railroads: BNSF, CN, CSX, CPKC, NS, and UP. All these railroads are connected by the New Orleans Public Belt Railroad Commission, a Class III switching railroad that coordinates traffic between all six Class I

[18] Port of South Louisiana, *Facts at a Glance* webpage (accessed December 2023)

railroads and the Port of New Orleans. This is also the only port facility in Louisiana that accommodates intermodal shipments.

Port of Greater Baton Rouge

The Port of Baton Rouge is located at the convergence of the Mississippi River and the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway. It is served by three Class I railroads: CN, CPKC, and UP. The port also provides direct linkages with barge, ship, and truck traffic.

Port of Lake Charles

The Port of Lake Charles (officially the Lake Charles Harbor and Terminal District) is a deepwater seaport in Lake Charles, Louisiana, located along the Calcasieu Ship Channel. It is serviced by the short line railroad, Port Rail, that interchanges with BNSF, CPKC, and UP.

Port of Natchitoches

The Port of Natchitoches is located on the Red River near Interstate 49 southeast of Shreveport. The port maintains five miles of tracks, a covered and lighted rail dock and direct access to CPKC.

Port of Caddo-Bossier

The Port of Caddo-Bossier is located southeast of Shreveport on the Red River and has a rail network with over 25 miles of industrial-grade track. Rail lines run along the Port's dock. The Port has mainline switching to UP with daily switching into the complex's intermodal yard. Local rail service access to CPKC is available.

Port of Iberia

The Port of Iberia in New Iberia, Louisiana is located south of Lafayette and offers a direct connection to the Gulf of Mexico and to the Gulf Intercoastal Waterway, connecting to the Mississippi River. The port offers a rail connection with the Louisiana and Delta Railroad and is currently expanding its facilities to handle larger barges.

Port of West St. Mary

The Port of West St. Mary is in southern Louisiana, 14 miles from the Gulf of Mexico along the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway. The Port currently maintains a 3,500 ft rail spur to facilitate port to rail transfers,

Port of Morgan City

The Port of Morgan City is in southern Louisiana and offers an efficient connection between the Gulf of Mexico and the rest of the U.S. freight network. The port contains a BNSF rail spur that grants easy access to the Union Pacific Rail System.

Port Manchac

Port Manchac is an inland port between Lake Maurepas and Lake Pontchartrain adjacent to U.S. Route 55 and CN's McComb Subdivision. The 140-acre intermodal terminal facility is governed by the South Tangipahoa Parsh Port Commission.

Greater Ouachita Port

The Greater Ouachita Port is on the Ouachita River in West Monroe near I-20. The facility has intermodal capabilities and connects with CPKC's Vicksburg Subdivision.

St. Bernard Port

The St. Bernard Port, Harbor and Terminal District encompasses over 430-acres along the Mississippi River and four terminals in Arabi, Chalmette, Meraux, and Violet. The port is on NS's New Orleans Subdivision.

Lake Providence Port

The Lake Providence Port is on the Mississippi River near the state line in East Carroll Parish and is the largest inland port in Louisiana. The port interchanges with DSRR's Lake Providence Subdivision.

Madison Parish Port

The Madison Parish Port Commission governs the 266-acre Madison Parish Port located along the Mississippi River. Like the Lake Providence Port, Madison Parish Port is also located on DSRR's Lake Providence Subdivision.

2.2.2 Railroad Owned Facilities

BNSF

BNSF owns and operates an intermodal facility in the New Orleans region, located in Westwego. This facility possesses Container on Flatcar (COFC) equipment, giving it the ability to double stack containers. BNSF is also connected to the Lacassine Transload Terminal, operated by Canal Companies, which interchanges crude oil destined for refineries or pipeline stations.[19]

CN

CN operates an intermodal facility at the Port of New Orleans in Harahan. This facility possesses COFC equipment, giving it the ability to double stack containers, reducing convoy space. West of the Mississippi River, CN connects to grain export terminals at Reserve, Destrehan, and Helvetia.

CPKC

CPKC does not operate its own intermodal facilities in Louisiana. It is, however, connected to the Baton Rouge Dedicated Terminal via BRS railroad. The terminal, operated by BRS parent company Watco, provides transloading services.[20] The carrier maintains limited access to intermodal facilities at ports across the state. Carload yards owned by CPKC are outlined in **Table 18**.

[19] Canal Companies, *Current Operations webpage* (accessed October 2023)
[20] Watco, *U.S. Terminals webpage* (accessed October 2023)

Table 18: CPKC Truck-Rail Facilities

Location	Facilities
New Orleans	Shrewsbury
Shreveport	Deramus, Harriet Street Yards
Baton Rouge	Baton Rouge Yard
Lake Charles	Mossville and Rose Bluff Yards
Monroe	Monroe Yard

Source: CPKC

NS

NS maintains two primary yards in New Orleans including an intermodal and carload facility on Oliver Street that possesses both Trailer on Flatcar (TOFC) and COFC equipment making it one of just two facilities in the state that can handle both types of cargo. NS also provides carload service at its yard in Chalmette.

UP

UP operates two intermodal facilities in Louisiana, one at the Port of Caddo-Bossier in Shreveport and the other near New Orleans in Avondale. Both facilities possess container handling equipment, but the Shreveport facility also contains trailer handling capabilities as well. UP also services the USA Rail Baton Rouge facility in Port Allen as well as the Lacassine Transload Terminal. Carload service is provided by UP at the locations outlined in **Table 19**. Blacklands Railroad, based out of Sulphur Springs, Texas, owns a transloading facility in Shreveport next to UP's Hollywood Yard.

Table 19: UP Carload Facilities

Location
Gouldsboro, New Orleans
Livonia
Baton Rouge
Alexandria
Monroe
Hollywood, Shreveport
Riverside, Shreveport

Source: UP

2.3 Freight Rail Demand

Louisiana rail freight flows from 2021 were analyzed by directional flow and commodity type to establish a baseline that is representative of current conditions. The commodity flow analysis and supporting evaluation of Louisiana's rail network were then used to determine future demand.

Analysis of confidential carload waybill sample data was undertaken to determine top commodities and the direction of freight rail flows in, out, through, and within Louisiana. The analysis was performed using the Surface Transportation Board's (STB) rail Carload Waybill Sample for 2021. Rail freight movement analysis for Louisiana indicates that over 137 million net tons were moved in 2021 with a total value of over $180 billion.

Louisiana Ranking Among U.S. States (2021):

20th – Originated Rail Carloads (1.6% of total U.S. carloads)

13th – Originated Rail Tons (2.5% of total U.S. tons)

20th – Terminated Rail Carloads (1.5% of total U.S. carloads)

16th – Terminated Rail Tons (2.5% of total U.S. tons)

Source: AAR State Rankings 2021

2.3.1 Directional Flow

Inbound, outbound, and intrastate freight flows generate commerce inside Louisiana. Products that are mined, grown, or produced in Louisiana and exported to other states or countries are represented by outbound freight flows. Inbound freight flows are commodities that are transported into the state for consumption, value-added processing, or onward export. Intrastate traffic represents economic activity or trade that both originate and terminate inside Louisiana, thus creating jobs and economic activity inside the state.

Louisiana plays an important role in the nation's freight rail transportation system. In 2021, Louisiana railroads carried 137.3 million net tons of freight. Through traffic leads directional movement (60.8 million tons, 44.3% of total). Through traffic has little impact on Louisiana's economy, outside of jobs associated with the railroad itself. Most through traffic resulted from flows between the markets located in the Southwest, Southeast and Mountain regions. Outbound (34.4 million tons, 25.1% of total) and inbound (34.7 million tons, 25.3% of total) movements were nearly equal in 2021. Intrastate flow, shipments originating and terminating in Louisiana, accounted for over 7.3 million tons which comprised 5.3% of freight rail movements.

Flow by Tonange

Total tonnage moved through Louisiana decreased slightly since 2018, exhibited a major drop in 2020, but recovered back to near 2018 levels in 2021 and after (see**Table 20).** Since 2018, inbound and outbound freight fluctuated the most out of all flow directions. Inbound freight tonnage out-performed outbound shipments in 2018 and 2019 before dropping below

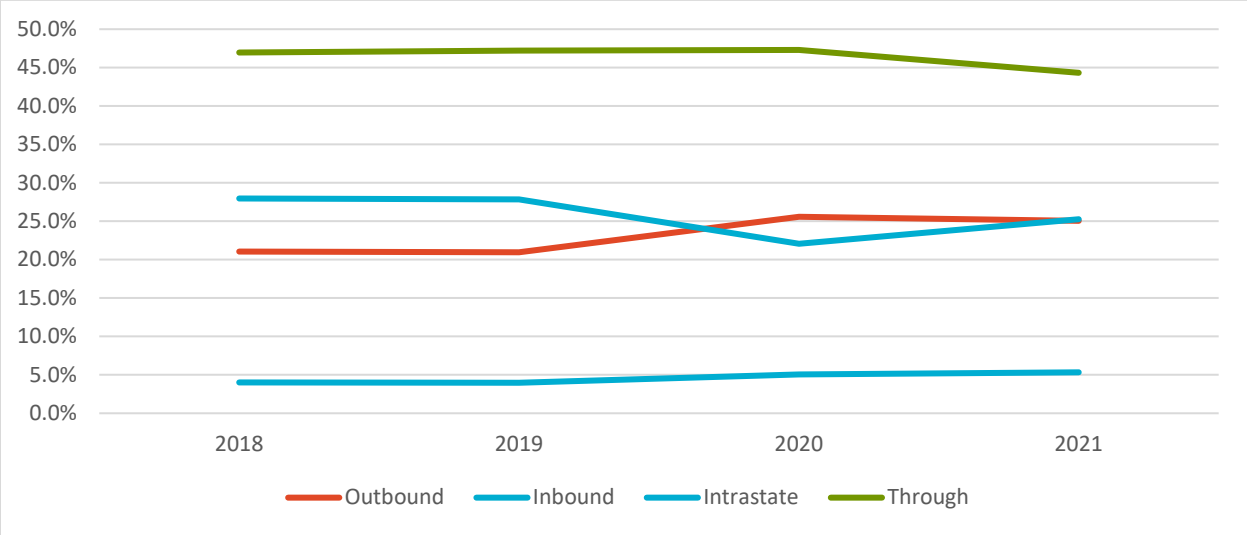
outbound tonnage in 2020. All these drops in 2020 resulted from system slowdowns related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Freight moving inbound and outbound was nearly equal in 2021. Through and intrastate movements have remained realtively consistent in recent years, as shown in **Figure 2**.

Table 20: Freight Tonnage by Flow Direction, by Year 2018 to 2021

Direction	2018	2019	2020	2021
Outbound	28,960,857	28,405,193	32,811,117	34,393,862
Inbound	38,459,447	37,729,607	28,305,633	34,682,885
Intrastate	5,537,242	5,384,202	6,477,592	7,314,987
Through	64,582,283	64,004,782	60,668,777	60,816,797
Total	**137,539,829**	**135,523,784**	**128,263,119**	**137,208,530**

Source: STB Carload Waybill Sample data

Figure 2: Freight Tonnage by Flow Direction, 2018-2021



Source: STB Carload Waybill Sample data

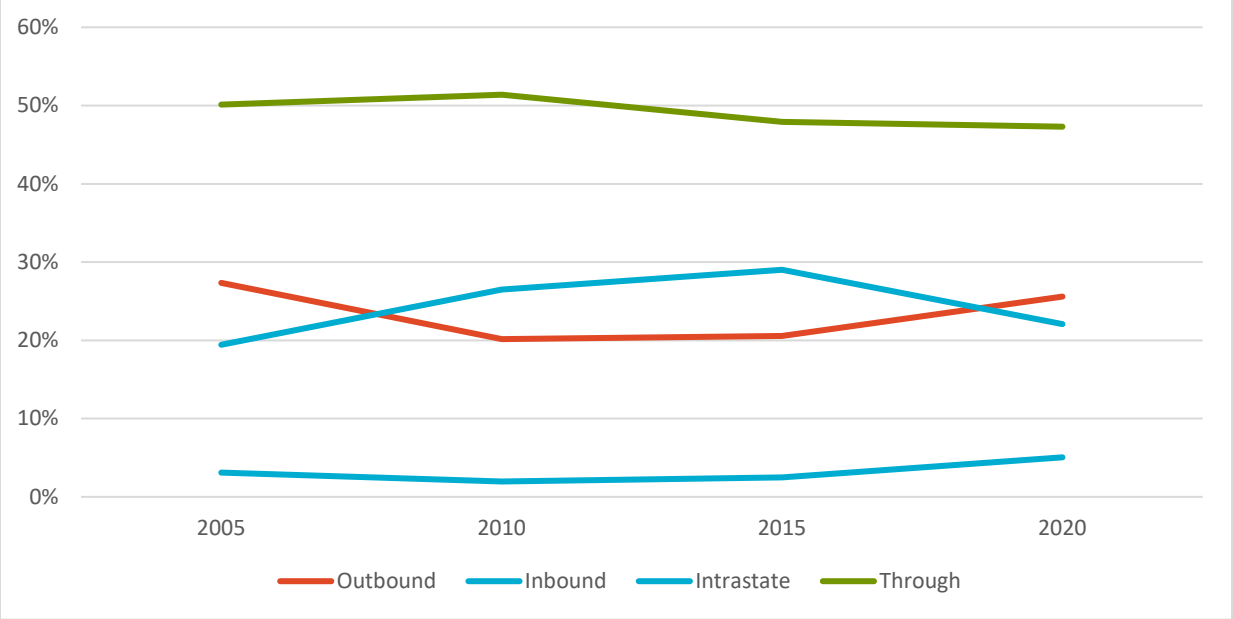
Looking at a longer timeframe, overall rail tonnage increased from 116.4 million tons in 2005 to 128.3 million tons in 2020 (see **Table 21**). However, there was a moderate decline in through traffic volumes and great fluctuation in inbound and outbound tonnage between 2005 and 2020. Intrastate movements increased by 180% between 2005 and 2020 but made up no more than 5% of total traffic in the years studied.

Table 21: Rail Freight, in Millions of Tons, by Flow Direction - Five Year Intervals 2005 to 2020

Direction	2005		2010		2015		2020	
Outbound	31.83	27%	24.45	20%	27.61	21%	32.81	26%
Inbound	22.63	19%	32.14	26%	38.92	29%	28.31	22%
Intrastate	3.6	3%	2.38	2%	3.32	2%	6.48	5%
Through	58.37	50%	62.34	51%	64.30	48%	60.67	47%
Total	**116.43**	100%	**128.19**	100%	**142.65**	100%	**128.27**	100%

Source: STB Carload Waybill Sample data

Figure 3: Freight Tonnage by Flow Direction, Five Year Intervals 2005 to 2020



Source: STB Carload Waybill Sample data

Flow by Value

More than $180 billion worth of products and resources moved across Louisiana rail in 2021 (see **Table 22**). Through movements accounted for the largest share of value at 51% while intrastate traffic only accounted for 6%. Outbound and inbound shipments were 31% and 13% of 2021 value, respectively, despite similar tonnage moved in each of these directions. This discrepancy points to a lucrative export market where Louisiana's rail network is used to transport large volumes of relatively high-cost commodities to trading partners across North America.

Table 22: Freight Value by Flow Direction (2021)

Direction	Value (Millions)	Percent of Total Value
Outbound	$55,753	31%
Inbound	$22,792	13%
Intrastate	$10,395	6%
Through	$91,202	51%
Total	**$180,142**	**100%**

Source: STB Carload Waybill Sample data

2.3.2 Carload and Intermodal Freight

Ninety-five percent of freight rail tonnage were carload shipments in 2021, meaning commodities were moved using rail-specific car types such as boxcars, hoppers, and tank cars. Details on carload shipments in 2021 are summarized in **Table 23.**

Table 23: Carload Shipment Statistics (2021)

Direction	Tons	Percent of Total Tons	Value (Millions)	Percent of Total Value
Outbound	33,926,262	26.0%	$53,516	38.0%
Inbound	34,074,285	26.1%	$19,689	14.0%
Intrastate	7,314,987	5.6%	$10,395	7.4%
Through	55,294,518	42.3%	$57,385	40.7%
Total	**130,610,052**	**100%**	**$140,385**	**100%**

Source: STB Carload Waybill Sample data

Intermodal rail shipments are movements of shipping containers or truck trailers on the rail network. “Intermodal” is defined as the use of multiple modes to transport commodities in uniform containers. This means intermodal freight is transported by truck or water before and/or after being transported by rail. The destinations of intermodal freight traveling from or through Louisiana range from regional Gulf Coast markets, destinations across North America, to world markets across the globe. Intermodal rail freight destined for foreign markets typically ends at a port facility for loading onto ships. Given the number and diversity of ports throughout Louisiana, intermodal shipments are a large part of freight moving within the state.

Intermodal shipments shown in **Table 24** account for only 4.8% of freight rail tonnage in 2021, dominated by through movements. The average value of one ton of intermodal freight ($5,934) is five times higher than one ton of carload freight ($1,079). This is because intermodal shipments tend to be consumer goods and manufactured materials, whereas carload freight is largely raw materials.

Table 24: Intermodal Shipment Statistics (2021)

Direction	Tons	Percent of Intermodal Tons	Value (Millions)	Percent of Total Value
Outbound	467,600	7.1%	$2,237	5.7%
Inbound	608,600	9.2%	$3,103	7.9%
Intrastate	--	--	--	--
Through	5,522,278	83.7%	$33,818	86.4%
Total	6,598,478	**100%**	**$39,158**	**100%**

Source: STB Carload Waybill Sample data

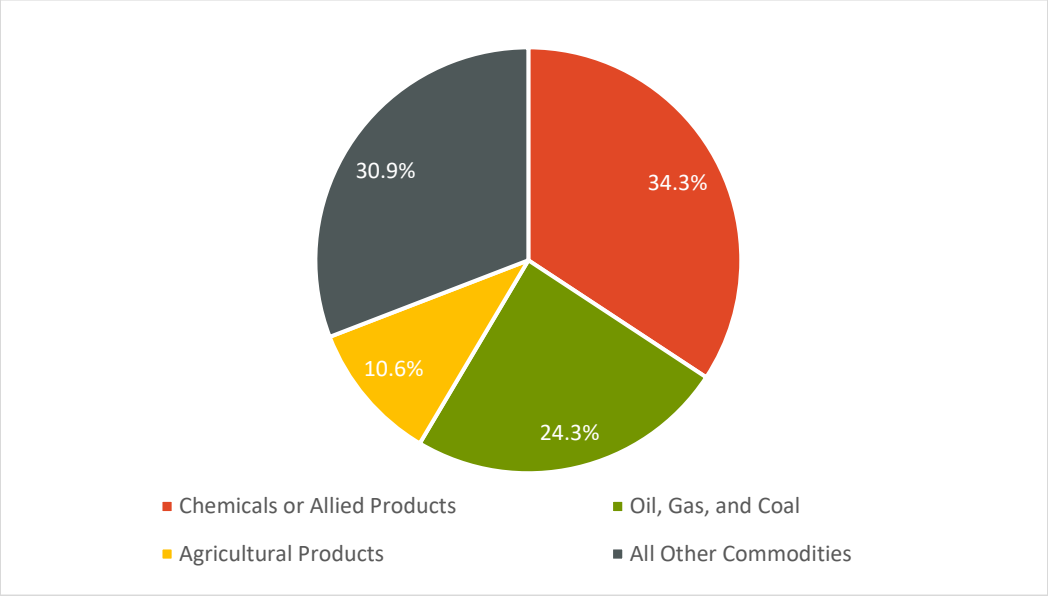
2.3.3 Top Commodities

A wide variety of commodities move throughout Louisiana on its freight rail network but a few account for the majority of both tonnage and value.

Commodity by Tonnage

Figure 4 highlights the top commodity groups by tonnage. *Chemicals or Allied Products*, *Oil, Gas and Coal*, and *Agricultural Products* make up nearly 70% of the tonnage moved by rail in the state.

Figure 4: Top Commodities as a Share of Total Freight Rail Tonnage, 2021



Source: STB Carload Waybill Sample data

Note: Oil, Gas, and Coal constitutes STCC categories 11, 13, and 29

Within the broad commodity groups shown in **Figure 4**, *Plastics and Synthetic Resins* and *Bituminous Coal* are the top two commodites moved within the state, combining for 29% of the gross freight rail tonnage. There is a precipitous drop after these top rail commodities as shown

in **Table 25**. Three of the top five rail commodities by gross tonnage (*Plastics and Synthetic Resins, Misc. Industrial Organic Chemicals, and Potassium or Sodium Compound*) fall within the *Chemical and Allied Product* category. The 23 three-, four-, and five-digit Standard Transportation Commodity Code (STCC) commodities that are part of the larger *Chemical and Allied Product* category account for over one-third (34.3%) of rail freight tonnage in 2021. *Chemical and Allied Products* and *Bituminous Coal* shipments together equate to 66.7 million tons of freight which is nearly one-half (48.6%) of total gross freight rail tonnage moved in 2021.

Table 25: Top Rail Commodities by Tonnage, All Directions (2021)

Commodity	Tons	Percent of Total Tonnage
Plastics and Synthetic Resins	20,428,151	15%
Bituminous Coal	19,687,997	14%
Grain	10,932,891	8%
Misc. Industrial Organic Chemicals	8,812,430	6%
Potassium or Sodium Compound	5,866,134	4%

Source: STB Carload Waybill Sample data

Top five commodities by tonnage are shown in **Table 26** for each flow direction. *Plastics and Synthetic Resins* are one of the 23 three-, four-, and five-digit sub-categories within the *Chemicals and Allied Products* category (STCC code 28) that are indicated below with red. Energy-related materials and products (petroleum, oil, coal, and associated commodities) are shown below in green. Agricultural products are identified with yellow.

Table 26: Top Rail Commodities by Tonnage and Flow Direction (2021)

Commodity	2-digit STCC code*	Tons	Percent of Total Directional Tonnage
Outbound			
Plastics and Synthetic Resins	28	9,325,885	41.7%
Misc. Industrial Organic Chemicals	28	4,615,595	20.7%
Potassium or Sodium Compound	28	3,036,605	13.6%
Petroleum Refining Products	29	2,813,930	12.6%
Fiber, Paper, or Pulpboard	26	2,547,785	11.4%
Inbound			
Bituminous Coal	11	8,835,510	43.7%
Grain	01	3,954,170	19.6%
Broken Stone or Riprap	14	3,510,949	17.4%
Oil Kernels, Nuts or Seeds	01	1,985,981	9.8%
Crude Petroleum	13	1,934,039	9.6%
Intrastate			
Plastics and Synthetic Resins	28	2,991,756	48.1%
Misc. Coal or Petroleum Products	29	1,524,331	24.5%
Primary Forest Materials	24	1,266,233	20.4%
Misc. Industrial Organic Chemicals	28	238,640	3.8%
Petroleum Refining Products	29	192,565	3.1%
Through			
Bituminous Coal	11	10,817,462	34.9%
Plastics and Synthetic Resins	28	7,446,365	24.0%
Grain	01	6,425,057	20.7%
Primary Iron or Steel Products	33	3,228,081	10.4%
Misc. Industrial Organic Chemicals	28	3,070,110	9.9%

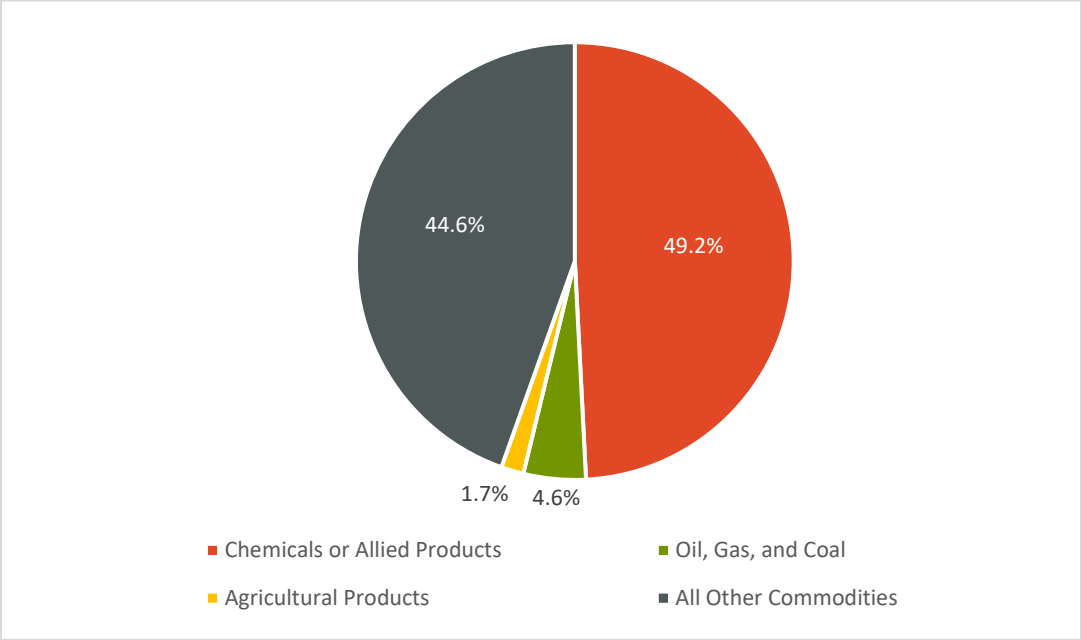
Source: STB Carload Waybill Sample data

** Chemicals or Allied Products (STCC code 28) shown in red; Coal (STCC 11), Crude Oil/Natural Gas (STCC 13), and Petroleum and Coal Products (STCC 29) shown in green.*

Commodity by Value

Figure 5 highlights the top commodity groups by value. *Chemicals or Allied Products* make up nearly half of the value moved by rail in the state.

Figure 5: Top Commodities as a Share of Total Freight Rail Value, 2021



Source: STB Carload Waybill Sample data

Note: Oil, Gas, and Coal constitutes STCC categories 11, 13, and 29

The most valuable commodity moving through Louisiana was *Plastics and Synthetic Resins* which were worth over $54 million, accounting for 30% of total freight rail commodity value (see **Table 27**). *Motor Vehicles*, while a small portion of freight rail tonnage, made up a relatively sizeable portion (7%) of overall value in 2021.

Table 27: Top Rail Commodities by Value, All Directions, 2021

Commodity	Value (Millions)	Percent of Total Value
Plastics and Synthetic Resins	$54,489	30%
FAK* Shipments	$16,807	9%
Motor Vehicles	$12,542	7%
Chemical Preparations, NEC**	$8,570	5%
Misc. Industrial Organic Chemicals	$8,084	4%

Source: STB Carload Waybill Sample data

**Freight of all kinds*

***Not elsewhere classified*

Table 28 shows top commodities by value for each freight flow direction. Plastics and related materials were 63.6% of outbound rail freight value, 87.2% of total intrastate value, and 39.2% of through value. *Motor Vehicles* imported into Louisiana totaling over $3 billion in value exceeded one-third of total inbound value in 2021. Unlike the analysis for gross tonnage, commodities in the agricultural, oil, gas, and coal categories do not have the highest dollar value. These commodities are largely raw resources that are shipped in great volumes but do not command high prices. Chemicals, on the other hand, dominate the value of freight rail shipments in Louisiana as they require specialized manufacturing.

Table 28: Top Rail Commodities by Value and Flow Direction, 2021

Commodity	2-digit STCC code	Value (Millions)	Percent of Total Directional Value
Outbound			
Plastics and Synthetic Resins	**28**	$24,875	63.6%
Misc. Industrial Organic Chemicals	**28**	$4,225	10.8%
Chemical Preparations, NEC*	**28**	$3,816	9.7%
Motor Vehicles	37	$3,361	8.6%
Misc. Industrial Inorganic Chemicals	**28**	$2,860	7.3%
Inbound			
Motor Vehicles	37	$3,457	35.7%
FAK Shipments**	46	$1,838	19.0%
Plastics and Synthetic Resins	**28**	$1,772	18.3%
Animal By-product (inedible)	20	$1,421	14.7%
Chemical Preparations, NEC*	**28**	$1,201	12.4%
Intrastate			
Plastics and Synthetic Resins	**28**	$7,980	87.2%
Chemical Preparations, NEC*	**28**	$472	5.2%
Primary Forest Materials	24	$327	3.6%
Misc. Industrial Organic Chemicals	**28**	$223	2.4%
Gum or Wood Chemicals	28	$150	1.6%
Through			
Plastics and Synthetic Resins	**28**	$19,862	39.2%
FAK Shipments**	46	$13,987	27.6%
Primary Iron or Steel Products	33	$7,014	13.9%
Motor Vehicles	37	$5,725	11.3%
Small Packaged Freight Shipments	47	$4,034	8.0%

Source: STB Carload Waybill Sample data

** Not elsewhere classified*

*** Freight of all kinds*

2.3.4 Top Trading Partners

The state of Illinois is one of the top rail trading partners for Louisiana (see **Table 29** and **Table 30**). Illinois imported 12% of all rail freight rail tonnage leaving Louisiana in 2021 and was the origin of 31% of shipments by tonnage terminating in the state. *Motor Vehicles* were the top commodity by value shipped from Illinois to Louisiana in 2021. By tonnage, *Bituminous Coal* dominated Illinois shipments terminating in Louisiana. Illinois is the third highest producer of bituminous coal (14%) after West Virginia (30%) and Pennsylvania (16%).[21]

Illinois was second only to Texas for gross tons of rail freight leaving Louisiana. The most shipped commodity to both Illinois and Texas in 2021 was within the *Plastics and Synthetic Resins* category (explored further in **Section 2.3.5**).

Table 29: Top Origin States, 2021

State	Tons	% of Total Tons
IL	10,888,490	31%
AR	3,627,698	10%
TX	3,298,191	10%
WY	2,699,165	8%
AL	1,651,025	5%

Source: STB Carload Waybill Sample data

Nearly half (46%) of freight rail tonnage originating in Louisiana terminates in the five states listed in **Table 30**. In 2021, Texas was Louisiana's number one trade partner, receiving a sizable one-fifth of all rail freight originating in the state. Louisiana's top rail commodity, *Plastics and Synthetic Resins*, accounted for 33% of freight rail tonnage and 58% of freight rail shipment value flowing from Louisiana to Texas. When including through movements originating outside of Louisiana, 33 million tons (35%) of freight handled by Louisiana's rail network terminated in Texas.

Table 30: Top Destination States, 2021

State	Tons	% of Total Tons
TX	6,845,410	20%
IL	4,248,142	12%
CA	2,093,735	6%
GA	1,424,530	4%
SC	1,366,255	4%

Source: STB Carload Waybill Sample data

[21] U.S Energy Information Administration, *Coal Explained* webpage (accessed November, 2023)

Trade with Mexico and Canada

Louisiana's Class I presence and centralized location on the North American rail network means infrastructure in the state plays a crucial role in international commerce. The import of crude petroleum from Canada fuels Louisiana's petrochemical and oil refining industries. In exchange, Louisiana's number one commodities exported to Canada are plastics and other industrial organic chemicals. **Table 31** shows freight rail commodities exchanged with Canada in 2021.

Table 31: Louisiana Freight Rail Trade with Canada, 2021

Flow Direction	Tonnage	Top Commodity by Tonnage	Value (Millions)	Top Commodity by Value
Outbound	476,270	Misc. Industrial Organic Chemicals	$813	Plastics and Synthetic Resins
Inbound	2,082,884	Crude Petroleum	$1,467	Crude Petroleum
Through	2,518,183	Crude Petroleum	$2,730	Crude Petroleum

Source: STB Carload Waybill Sample data

Louisiana's trade with Mexico is smaller by tonnage than trade with Canada, but still represents over $1 billion in product moving to or through Louisiana annually. As shown in **Table 32**, rail freight shipments traveling through Louisiana dominate trade with Mexico by tonnage and value.

Table 32: Louisiana Freight Rail Trade with Mexico, 2021

Flow Direction	Tonnage	Top Commodity by Tonnage	Value (Millions)	Top Commodity by Value
Outbound*	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Inbound	22,800	Nonmetal Minerals, Processed	$5.68	Nonmetal Minerals, Processed
Through	1,179,381	Petroleum Refining Products	$1,074	Plastics and Synthetic Resins

Source: STB Carload Waybill Sample data

**No commodities were identified as outbound from Louisiana to Mexico in the 2021 Waybill sample*

2.3.5 Major Commodity Trends

Louisiana moved over 100 unique commodities over its rail network in 2021. Two commodities, however, are responsible for driving the success of rail carriers and dominate freight rail in Louisiana: *Plastics* and *Coal*.

Plastics and Synthetic Resins

Products falling within the *Plastics and Synthetic Resins* category (STCC code 282) were the top commodity in the outbound and intrastate flow directions in 2021. These commodities, and

others falling within the larger *Chemicals or Allied Products* two-digit STCC code, make up a hefty segment of the state's economy as discussed further in **Section 2.8.3.2**.

As shown in **Table 33**, outbound freight increased by over 40% between 2010 and 2021. Commodities within the Plastics and Synthetic Resins category rose from 18.4% of outbound shipments in 2010 to 27.1% in 2021. Over this time, products and materials shipped from Louisiana grew by 47.3%. A 200% increase in overall intrastate rail shipments by gross tonnage occurred between 2010 and 2021, driven largely by plastics products moving within the state. Plastic products represent large shares of the value transported in the outbound, through, and intrastate flows. **Table 34** indicates the share of freight rail value made up by products falling within this category, including three-quarters of intrastate shipments.

Table 33: Plastics and Synthetic Resins Commodity Trends by Tonnage, 2010-2021

Year	Tons	Percent of Flow Direction Tonnage	Percent Change from 2010	Tons	Percent Change from 2010
	Plastics and Synthetic Resins Outbound Shipments			All Outbound Rail Freight	
2010	4,498,480	18.4%	--	24,450,397	--
2021	9,325,885	27.1%	47.3%	34,393,862	40.7%
	Plastics and Synthetic Resins Intrastate Shipments			All Intrastate Rail Freight	
2010	969,124	40.7%	--	2,378,808	--
2021	2,991,756	40.9%	0.4%	7,314,987	207.5%

Source: STB Carload Waybill Sample data

Table 34: Plastics and Synthetic Resins Commodity Value, 2021

Value (Millions)	% of Flow Direction Value	Value ($M)
Plastics and Synthetic Resins Outbound Shipments		All Outbound Rail Freight
$24,875	44.6%	$55,753
Plastics and Synthetic Resins Intrastate Shipments		All Intrastate Rail Freight
$7,980	76.8%	$10,395
Plastics and Synthetic Resins Through Shipments		All Through Rail Freight
$19,862	21.8%	$91,202

Source: STB Carload Waybill Sample data

Coal

Bituminous coal is the most abundant type of coal found in the U.S., accounting for about 45% of total U.S. coal production in 2021.[22] Coal shipments account for sizable shares of inbound and through freight rail tonnage (**Table 35**). Inbound *Bituminous Coal* (STCC code 1121)

[22] U.S Energy Information Administration, Coal Explained webpage (accessed November, 2023)

shipments increased by 26.5% between 2010 and 2021, whereas through shipment tonnage dropped by over one-third.

Table 35: Inbound Coal Shipments, 2010-2021

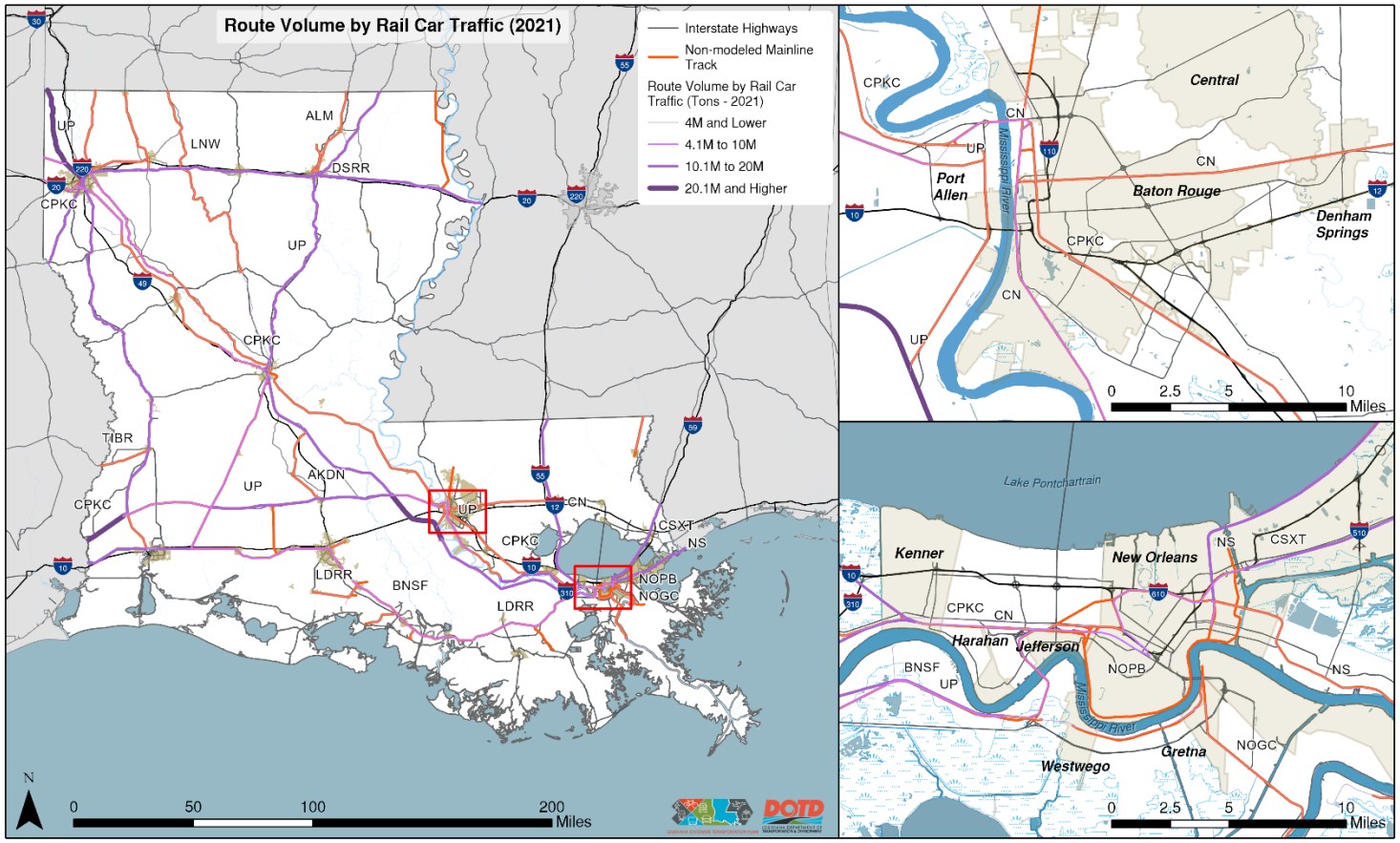
Year	Tons	Percent of Flow Direction Tonnage	Percent Change from 2010	Tons	Percent Change from 2010
	Bituminous Coal Inbound Shipments			All Inbound Rail Freight	
2010	6,472,000	20.1%	--	32,142,278	--
2021	8,835,510	25.5%	26.5%	34,682,885	7.9%
	Bituminous Coal Through Shipments			All Through Rail Freight	
2010	17,045,596	27.3%	--	62,337,840	--
2021	10,817,462	17.8%	-34.9%	60,816,797	-2.4%

Source: STB Carload Waybill Sample data

2.3.6 Route Volumes

Analysis has also been conducted on route volumes calculated using STB Carload Waybill Sample data for baseline year 2021. Gross tonnage and rail car traffic across Louisiana's rail system are visualized in **Figure 6** and **Figure 7**. Rail car traffic is relatively heavy on CPKC's Shreveport subdivision northwest of Shreveport, Beaumont subdivision southwest of DeQuincy, and UP's Livonia subdivision west of Baton Rouge. From a gross tonnage perspective, CPKC's Vicksburg subdivision across the top of the state through Monroe carries the largest volumes.

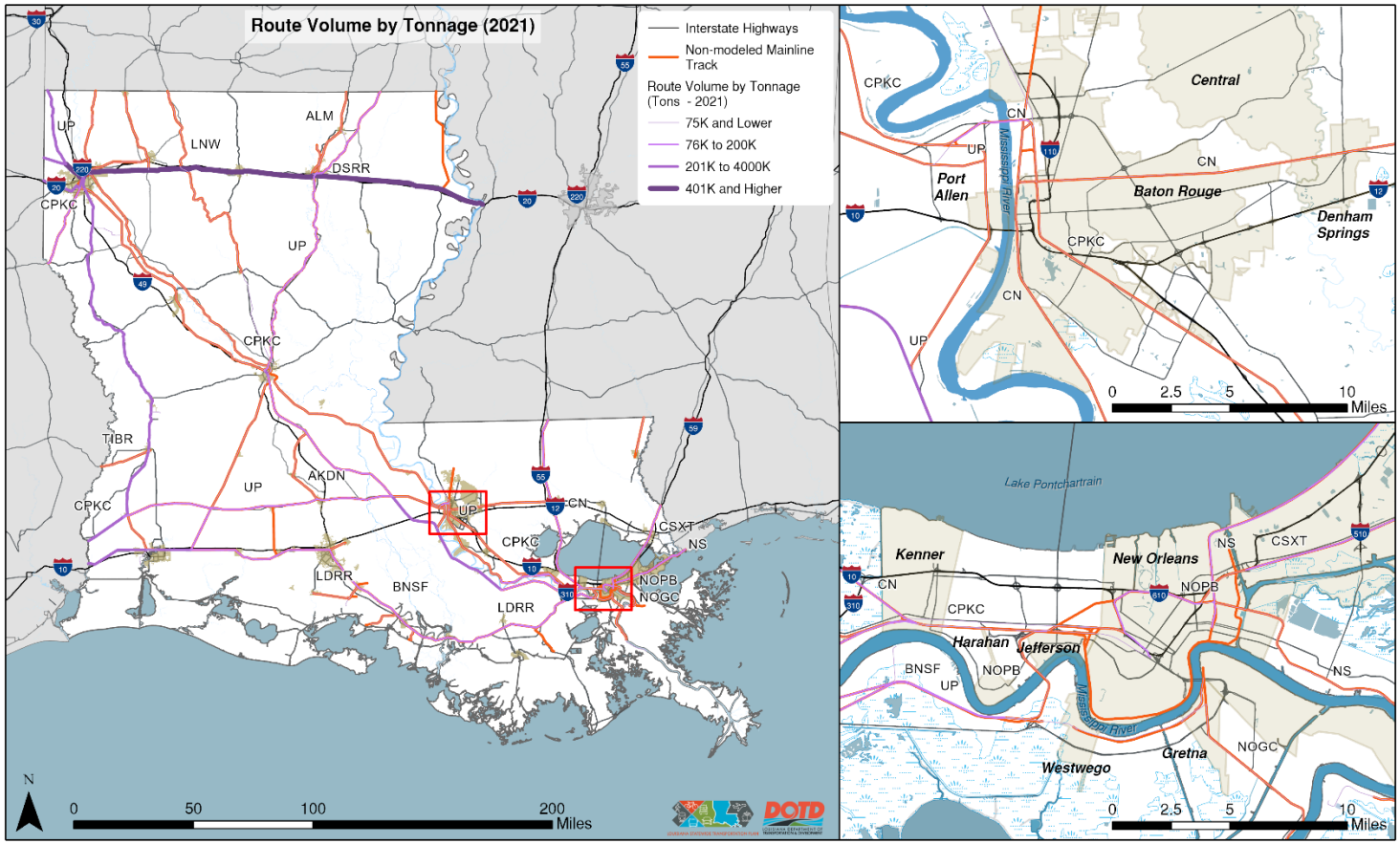
Figure 6: Route Volume by Railcar Traffic, 2021



Source: Federal Railroad Administration, USDOT Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS), STB Carload Waybill Sample data

Note: Due to limitations of the modeling process used to determine level of service, and the nature of operations along certain rail segment, not all operating mainline track is presented in this figure. Consult the map legend for non-modeled mainline track.

Figure 7: Route Volume by Tonnage, 2021



Source: Federal Railroad Administration, USDOT Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS), STB Carload Waybill Sample data

Note: Due to limitations of the modeling process used to determine level of service, and the nature of operations along certain rail segment, not all operating mainline track is presented in this figure. Consult the map legend for non-modeled mainline track

2.4 Passenger Rail

Passenger rail capacity in Louisiana has diminished greatly since the 1940's and 1950's. With the creation of the Federal Interstate Highway System and additional investments in road and airline infrastructure, passenger rail struggled to retain customers and served as a financial liability for freight rail corporations who were no longer profiting from transporting passengers. With the creation of the National Railroad Passenger Corporation (Amtrak) in 1970, passenger rail service was consolidated to three routes that run through New Orleans. There are no other passenger rail options in the region, including commuter rail.

2.4.1 Dedicated Passenger Rail Infrastructure

New Orleans Union Passenger Terminal (NOUPT)

Built in 1954, the New Orleans Union Passenger Terminal (NOUPT) is an intermodal facility located in Downtown New Orleans that serves Amtrak, Greyhound, Megabus and the New Orleans Regional Transit Authority (NORTA) which operates local busses and streetcars. Completed in 1954, NOUPT consolidated all New Orleans' passenger rail facilities into one centralized terminal and serves as the southern terminus for three long distance Amtrak routes. The station consists of covered platforms and a large waiting hall that is adorned by a 120-foot-long mural that depicts the history of Louisiana and New Orleans.

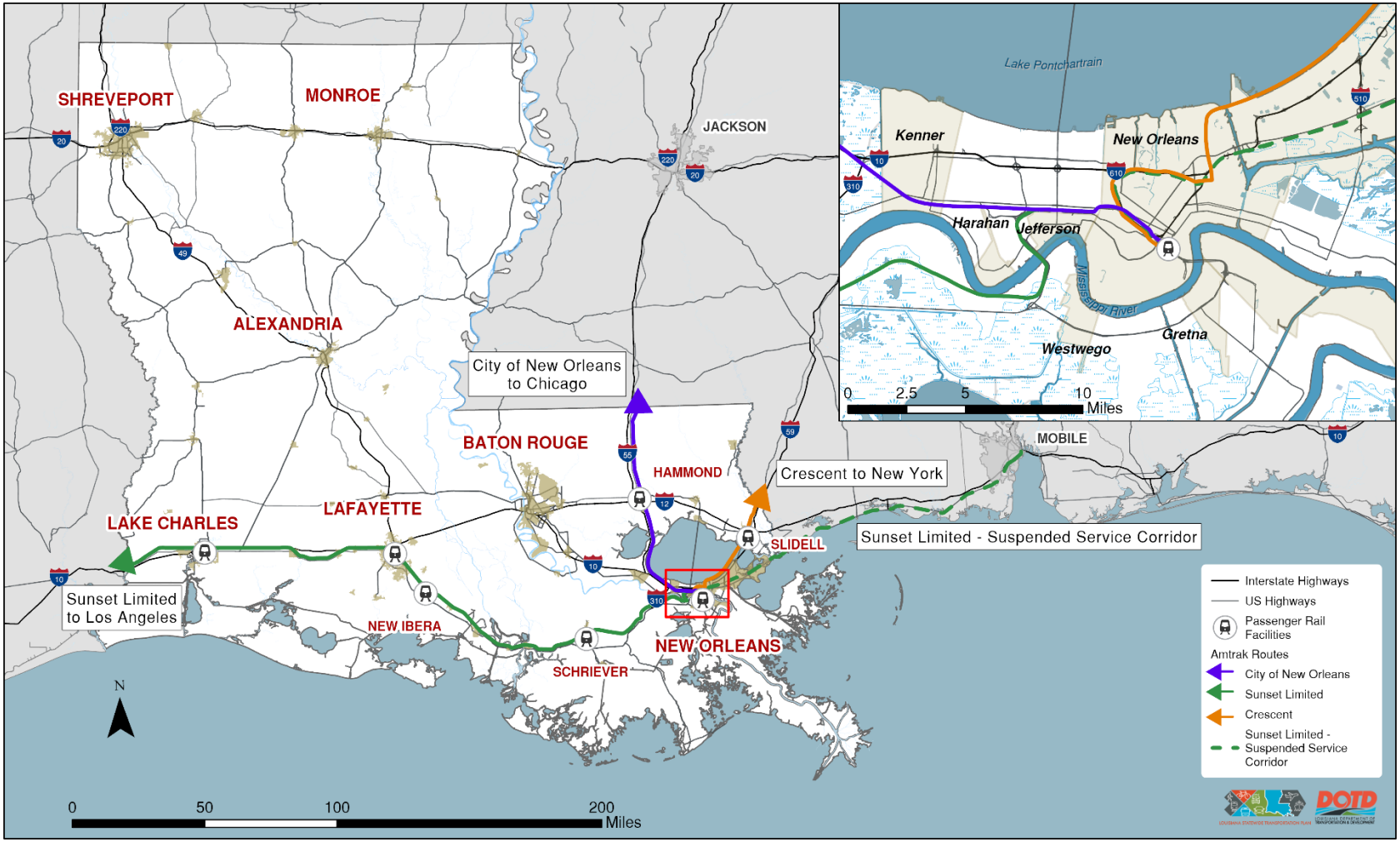
Amtrak (AMTK)

At the end of FY 2021, Amtrak operated an average of nearly six trains per day in Louisiana along three separate long-distance routes. They served seven stations throughout the state and transported 83,842 passengers. In FY 2021, Amtrak invested $2,321,280 across three different locations: New Orleans ($1,363,797), Reserve ($435,441) and Slidell ($120,349). Amtrak employed 191 residents of Louisiana and the average worker earned $79,620. Amtrak's New Orleans maintenance facility services and performs light overhauls for Amfleet, Superliner, and Viewliner cars for National Network trains. It also performs running and turn around maintenance on all the long-distance equipment and locomotives serving New Orleans.

2.4.2 Amtrak Intercity Passenger Rail Service

In Louisiana, New Orleans has historically served as a passenger rail hub and continues to play a large roll today, although service has been greatly reduced. Currently, Amtrak runs three routes through Louisiana, all of which radiate from New Orleans: The *Crescent*, The *City of New Orleans*, and the *Sunset Limited*. All three are national system routes and thus solely supported through federal appropriations. Amtrak routes servicing Louisiana communities are depicted in **Figure 8**.

Figure 8: Louisiana Amtrak Routes and Station Communities



Source: Amtrak, Federal Railroad Administration, USDOT Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS).

Crescent

The *Crescent* route is a long-distance Amtrak route that operates daily between New Orleans and New York City, New York. Trains leave New Orleans headed towards New York in the morning and arrive in New Orleans from New York in the evening. This route passes through Slidell before heading to major cities including Birmingham, Atlanta, Charlotte, Charlottesville, Washington D.C., and New York. The total trip takes around 32 hours and covers over 1,300 miles, including 48 miles in Louisiana. **Table 36** provides further route details.

Table 36: Crescent Service Details

Attribute		Route Details
Outbound Termini		New York
Louisiana Stations		NOL; SDL
Major Intermediate Cities		Birmingham, AL; Atlanta, GA; Washington D.C.; Philadelphia, PA
Frequency		One daily round-trip
Host Railroad		NS; NOUP
Route Miles*	Total	1,377 miles
	In State	48 miles
On-time Performance (2021)		54.6%

Source: Amtrak, FY 2021 State of Louisiana Fact Sheet, August 2022.

Route miles encompass main lead track only and include mileage of plural mainline segments.

City of New Orleans

The City of New Orleans route is a long-distance Amtrak route that operates daily between New Orleans and Chicago. Trains leave New Orleans daily in the early afternoon and arrive from Chicago later in the afternoon. Trains pass through Hammond, Louisiana before heading to major cities including Memphis, Tennessee and Jackson, Mississippi. The trip takes about 20 hours and covers 926 miles, including 120 miles inside of Louisiana. Further details on the service are presented in **Table 37**.

Table 37: City of New Orleans Service Details

Attribute		Route Details
Outbound Termini		Chicago
Louisiana Stations		NOL; HMD
Major Intermediate Cities		Memphis, TN; Jackson, MS
Frequency		One daily round-trip
Host Railroad		CN; NOUP
Route Miles*	Total	926 miles
	In State	120 miles
On-time Performance (2021)		85.0%

Source: Amtrak, FY 2021 State of Louisiana Fact Sheet, August 2022

Route miles encompass main lead track only and include mileage of plural mainline segments.

Sunset Limited

The *Sunset Limited* route is a long-distance Amtrak route that operates three days a week between New Orleans and Los Angeles, California (see **Table 38**). Trains leave New Orleans in the morning on Monday, Wednesday, and Saturday and arrive from Los Angeles every Sunday, Tuesday, and Friday night. The trip takes around 45 hours and covers almost 2,000 miles, with 251 of those miles being inside of Louisiana. Prior to Hurricane Katrina, the *Sunset Limited* continued east of New Orleans to Orlando, Florida. Negotiations and planning for the restoration of service to Florida is underway.

Table 38: Sunset Limited Service Details

Attribute		Route Details
Outbound Termini		Los Angeles
Louisiana Stations		NOL; SCH; NIB; LFT; LCH
Major Intermediate Cities		Houston, TX; San Antonio, TX; El Paso, TX; Tucson, AZ
Frequency		Three weekly roundtrips
Host Railroad		UP; BNSF; NOPB; CN; NOUP
Route Miles*	Total	1,995 miles
	In State	251 miles
On-time Performance (2021)		27.1%

Source: Amtrak, FY 2021 State of Louisiana Fact Sheet, August 2022
Route miles encompass main lead track only and include mileage of plural mainline segments.

2.4.3 Proposed Passenger Rail Services

Louisiana has various proposed passenger rail services in varied stages of development (see **Section 1.8.2**). These include:

Gulf Coast: Mobile – New Orleans

SRC, Amtrak and other various stakeholders are collaborating to introduce twice-daily round trips between Mobile, Alabama and New Orleans.

Baton Rouge Service: Baton Rouge – New Orleans

The vision for this corridor includes two daily roundtrips between Baton Rouge and New Orleans connecting both downtowns as well as Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport.

I-20 Corridor Service: Dallas-Fort Worth – Atlanta

The proposed I-20 Rail Corridor service will connect the mega-regions of Dallas-Fort Worth and Atlanta with the economies and populations of Northern Louisiana and beyond through connections with Amtrak's Texas Eagle, City of New Orleans, and Crescent trains.

2.4.4 Intercity Passenger Rail Stations

The three Amtrak intercity passenger rail routes operating in Louisiana serve seven stations across the state. Ridership is highest in New Orleans where all three services meet. All other stations accommodate one route each. Intercity rail stations and their ridership are provided in **Table 39**.

Table 39: Louisiana Intercity Rail Stations, 2021

City	Code	Routes	Ridership (2021)	Percent of Ridership
Hammond	HMD	City of New Orleans	4,406	5.3%
Lafayette	LFT	Sunset Limited	3,155	3.8%
Lake Charles	LCH	Sunset Limited	2,721	3.2%
New Iberia	NIB	Sunset Limited	929	1.1%
New Orleans	NOL	City of New Orleans, Sunset Limited, Crescent	70,092	83.6%
Schriever	SCH	Sunset Limited	678	0.8%
Slidell	SDL	Crescent	1,861	2.2%
Ridership Total			**83,842**	

Source: Amtrak, FY 2021 State of Louisiana Fact Sheet, August 2022

2.4.5 ADA Stations Program

According to Amtrak, "Amtrak's Americans with Disabilities Act Stations Program (ADASP) is a multi-year program developed to bring the stations, or the components of stations that Amtrak has ADA responsibility for, into compliance with ADA requirements as quickly and as efficiently as possible providing the best possible service to our passengers with disabilities."[23]

Amtrak is currently in the process of updating stations in Louisiana. **Table 40** details projects taking place at each of the stations including estimated construction timelines. As Amtrak completes these accessibility updates, they will also be completing minor work to ensure the stations are in a state of good repair.

[23] Amtrak, *Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Progress Report*, December 2022

Table 40: Amtrak ADA Station Upgrades in Louisiana, 2023

Station (Code)	Project Description	Construction Timeline	Cost
Hammond (HMD)	• Replace detectable warning surface along platform edge as well as ramp landings leading to the platform and platform signage. Repair expansion joints and platform concrete. • Repair pavers, ramps and transitions throughout the station and walkways, including door thresholds. • Add ramps, compliant doors and thresholds and room for maneuverability throughout the station. Address other non-compliant interior conditions. • Replace one accessible parking (long term) & drop off area.	Est. Start 10/14/2024 Est. Completion 4/14/2026	$1.7M
Lafayette (LFT)	• New 200 feet long by 12 feet wide ADA compliant 8" top-of-rail (ATOR) platform. • Provide new ADA access connection at north end. Provide connection to existing platform at south end. • Provide new tactile edge and signage along new platform length as well as lighting poles, fixtures, and associated conduit and wiring.	Est. Start 03/01/2024 Est. Completion 09/01/2024	$2.1M
Lake Charles (LCH)	No ADA Responsibility		
New Iberia (NIB)	• 500 feet long by 13 feet wide ADA compliant 8" above top-of-rail (tor) platform. • Provide concrete accessible walkway from platform to both walking area and W Washington Street. • Provide concrete ADA parking with striping and signage. • Remove and reinstall existing waiting shelter. • Provide wheelchair lift enclosure (WCLE). • Provide platform upgrades including detectable walking surface edge, lighting poles, fixtures, and associated conduit and wiring.	Est. Start Date 1/22/2024 Est. Completion 07/22/2025	$3.0M
New Orleans (NOL)	No ADA Responsibility		

Station (Code)	Project Description	Construction Timeline	Cost
Schriever (SCH)	• New 550’ 8” ATOR platform and accessible pathways. • Provide pathways from station to access new platform as well as platform lighting and signage.	Est. Start 04/08/2024 Est. Completion 10/05/2025	$2.3M
Slidell (SDL)	• New 550’ 8” ATOR platform and accessible pathways. • Provide pathways from station to access new platform as well as platform lighting and signage.	Est. Start 01/05/2024 Est. Completion 12/05/2024	$2.3M

Source: Amtrak

2.5 Passenger Rail Performance and Objectives

DOTD monitors the performance of passenger rail to understand emerging trends and resources needs. Passenger rail objectives align with previous planning efforts undertaken by DOTD that have been informed by stakeholders including railroads, shippers, and federal, state, and local partners.

2.5.1 Passenger Service Objectives

Enhance Existing Service

In 2016, Amtrak Engineering completed a major track restoration project on the NOUPT that included the removal and replacement of terminal tracks 2- 8 with welded rail and concrete ties. Additionally, the diesel shop tracks were rebuilt, and the coach yard shop lead was removed, relocated, and replaced in its original location. In 2017, Amtrak Engineering began a coach yard restoration. Yard tracks 1 and 3 were rebuilt and extended back to full length, allowing for improved switching operations.

Expand Passenger Rail

DOTD continues to search for possible ways to expand passenger rail service in Louisiana where appropriate including increasing the frequency of service between New Orleans and Houston and in 2018 DOTD developed a Passenger Rail Station Assessment. This was the first step in developing a guidance document for the state’s passenger rail transportation planning activities. This guidance document is intended to guide DOTD and its partners in conducting corridor studies, defining service objectives and then, ultimately implementing those services. Amtrak is also working in Louisiana to improve service.

In 2021, Amtrak released the Amtrak Connects US Corridor vision for expanding the country’s passenger rail network to meet current and future needs. This long-term vision proposes new routes, enhanced routes, and new stops across the United States. In support of these efforts,

the FRA established the Corridor Identification & Development Program to create a pipeline of intercity passenger rail projects ready for federal investment and technical assistance.

2.5.2 Performance Evaluation

The performance of intercity services, new and existing, will be compared against historic data to ensure investments and priorities are adequately improving intercity rail travel in Louisiana.

2.5.2.1 On-time Performance

On-time performance (OTP) is a key metric for passenger rail performance evaluation. OTP represents the percentage of trains to arrive at their terminating destination within a 15-minute window of the scheduled arrival time. Generally, Amtrak's national system long-distance routes report lower OTP compared to shorter state-supported routes. All Louisiana routes are long distance. OTP reported on these services is presented in **Table 41**.

Table 41: Intercity Passenger Rail On-Time Performance

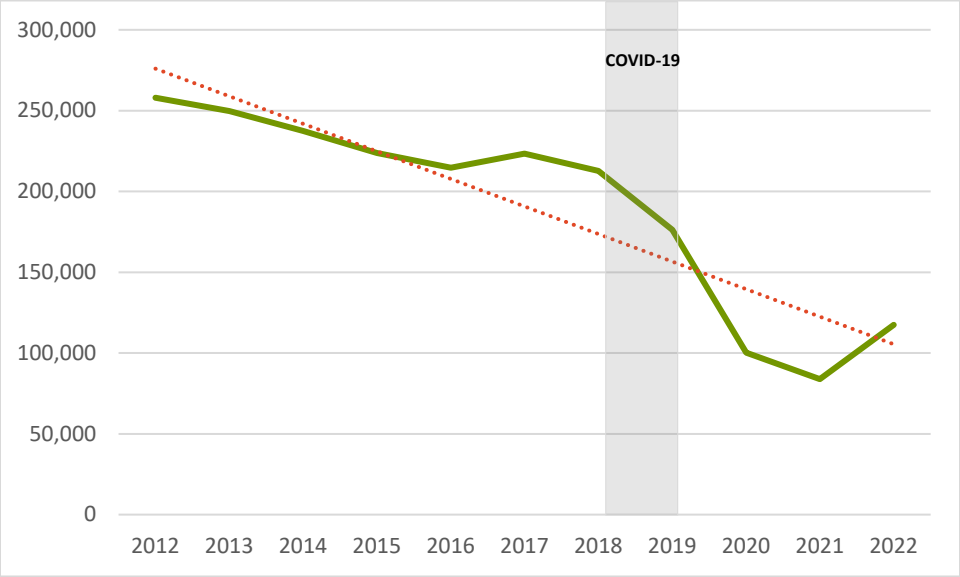
Amtrak Service	OTP (2021)
Crescent	54.6%
City of New Orleans	85.0%
Sunset Limited	27.1%

Source: Amtrak, FY 2021 State of Louisiana Fact Sheet, August 2022

2.5.2.2 Ridership

Passenger rail ridership over the past decade has been in decline in Louisiana. **Figure 9** depicts this trend and illustrates the outsized impact of the COVID-19 pandemic when Amtrak service nationwide was reduced, business operations were disturbed, and leisure travel was largely suspended. However, ridership has since rebounded from its 2020 low . DOTD and its partners will continue to monitor ridership trends as they anticipate normalizing back to pre-pandemic levels and as new services in Louisiana begin operation.

Figure 9: Louisiana Passenger Rail Ridership, 2012-2022



Source: Amtrak, 2022

As shown in **Table 42**, ridership has declined every year from the previous year except for 2016-2017. Ridership totals also reflect an artificially low ridership in 2020 and 2021 caused by COVID-19.

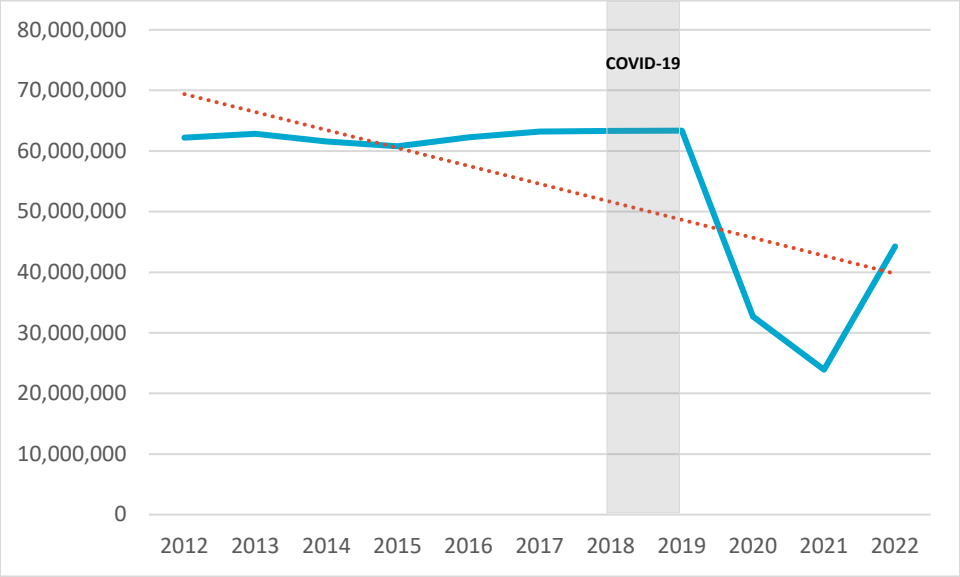
Table 42: Louisiana Passenger Rail Ridership, 2012-2022

2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
257,973	249,801	237,492	223,864	214,726	223,441	212,767	176,159	100,129	83,842	117,446

Source: Amtrak, 2022

Nationally, ridership was more stable from 2012 to 2019, as shown in **Figure 10**, leading up to a sharp drop off due to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020.

Figure 10: Amtrak Systemwide Ridership, 2012-2022

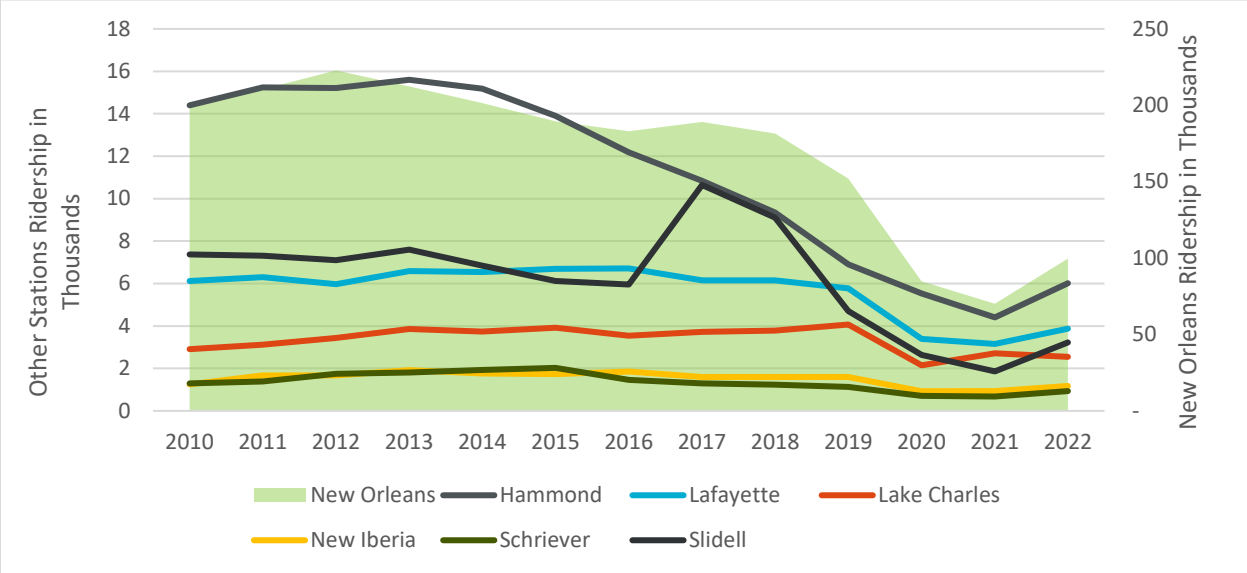


Source: Amtrak, 2022

Ridership by Station

All Louisiana stations have declined in ridership over the last decade. **Figure 11** illustrates ridership across the state's seven passenger rail stations. Travelers beginning or ending their trips in New Orleans in 2021 exceeded 70,000, accounting for 83.6% of total ridership. Because of this New Orleans ridership is shown along its own axis (right) in Figure 10.

Figure 11: Historical Trends for Passenger Rail Ridership by Station, 2010-2022



Source: BTS, 2023

Ridership levels have decreased the most at the Hammond station, with over 15,000 annual riders in 2013 to just over 6,000 riders in 2022. The Slidell station has also seen a steady decrease in riders, aside from 2017 and 2018 which saw a temporary jump in ridership before numbers sharply declined again in 2019. The Lake Charles and Lafayette stations experienced both increases and decreases in passenger counts between 2010 and 2019, only showing steep passenger declines with the onset on the COVID-19 pandemic. The New Iberia and Shriver stations move a lower volume of passengers than the other stations, but they also have dealt with less variation, consistently seeing around 1000-2000 riders annually. 2020 saw a steep decline in ridership at all stations and though ridership numbers have been increasing in recent years, those increases have yet to recover to pre-pandemic levels.

Ridership by Route

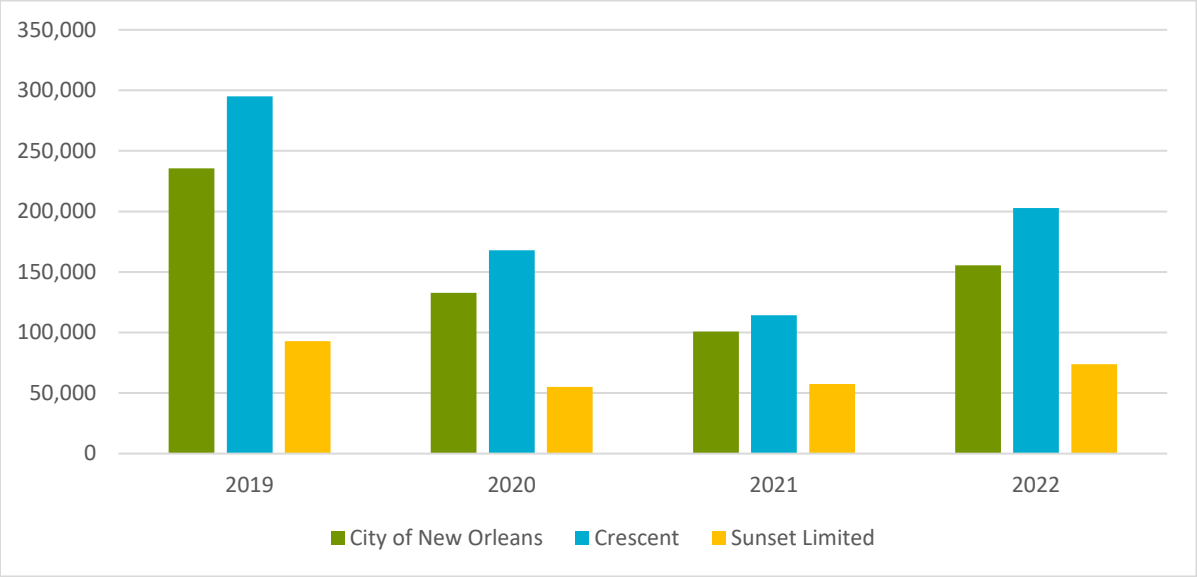
The City of New Orleans route originates in New Orleans and stops in Hammond as it travels north to Chicago. Passenger activity in Hammond has seen consistent decreases in year-to-year ridership since 2013 but is exhibiting strong post-pandemic recovery.

The Crescent originates in New Orleans and stops in Slidell as it travels northeast to New York City. Slidell experienced a large jump in passengers between 2016 and 2017 before experiencing steep declines that were exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Stations serviced by the Crescent and City of New Orleans services (New Orleans, Hammond, and Slidell) have shown the strongest growth in ridership between 2021 and 2022.

The Sunset Limited originates in New Orleans and travels west through the state stopping in Schriever, New Iberia, Lafayette, and Lake Charles before traveling on to Los Angeles. Stations along this route have some of the lowest ridership activity of all stations in Louisiana (New Iberia and Schriever) due to the relative population density of station's communities and the services limited frequencies (three weekly roundtrips). Stations along this route, New Orleans aside, have not experienced the rapid decline or recovery in ridership witnessed on the other services.

Looking at route-wide trends that account for ridership across all states, the Crescent is the top performing route with Louisiana service. **Figure 12** shows national ridership in recent years for Louisiana services. Across these years (2019-2022), the Sunset Limited has recorded the lowest ridership among all long distance Amtrak routes.

Figure 12: Route-wide Ridership, Louisiana Services, 2019-2022



Source: BTS, 2023

2.5.2.3 New Services

Partnerships will be necessary to expand passenger rail access in Louisiana. Most proposed passenger rail routes will extend outside the boundaries of a single state. It is imperative that a strong partnership and working relationship be developed between the state partners or public entities responsible for jointly overseeing the service. The partnership will vary depending on the route of the service. Where the route endpoint is close to the state line one state may dominate. In other cases, all states must be equal partners.

DOTD works with the SRC to expand passenger rail service in Louisiana as well as Mississippi and Alabama. The SRC members are appointed by the governors of Alabama, Louisiana, and Mississippi and have recently been partnering with Amtrak to study the expansion of passenger rail service across the region. As plans are advanced for new and expanded services, specific projects needed to accommodate these services will be identified.

Further discussion of proposed passenger rail services in the state can be found in **Chapter 1** of this SRP and in **Section 2.4.3** of this Chapter.

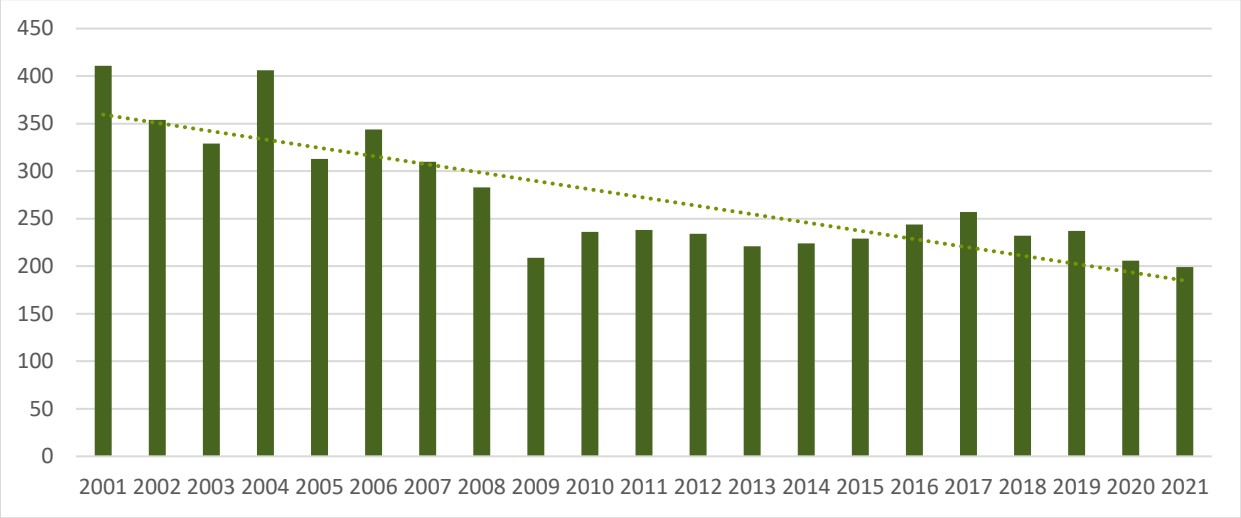
2.6 Safety

DOTD maintains a robust system to track, manage, and improve safety across Louisiana's rail network. Rail safety within Louisiana is managed through a system of state and federal laws and requirements. Federal rail regulations and requirements fall under the jurisdiction of the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA). In Louisiana, DOTD and other state agencies focus on grade crossing safety and safety inspection, which is detailed in the section below.

2.6.1 Incident Trends

2021 had the fewest railroad incidents dating back to 1975 when FRA began publishing this metric. *Incidents* refer to all reportable events causing damage or injury. The 199 reported incidents in Louisiana in 2021 was just 10.2% of those reported in 1979, the highest on record. **Figure 13** depicts reported incidents dating back to 2001.

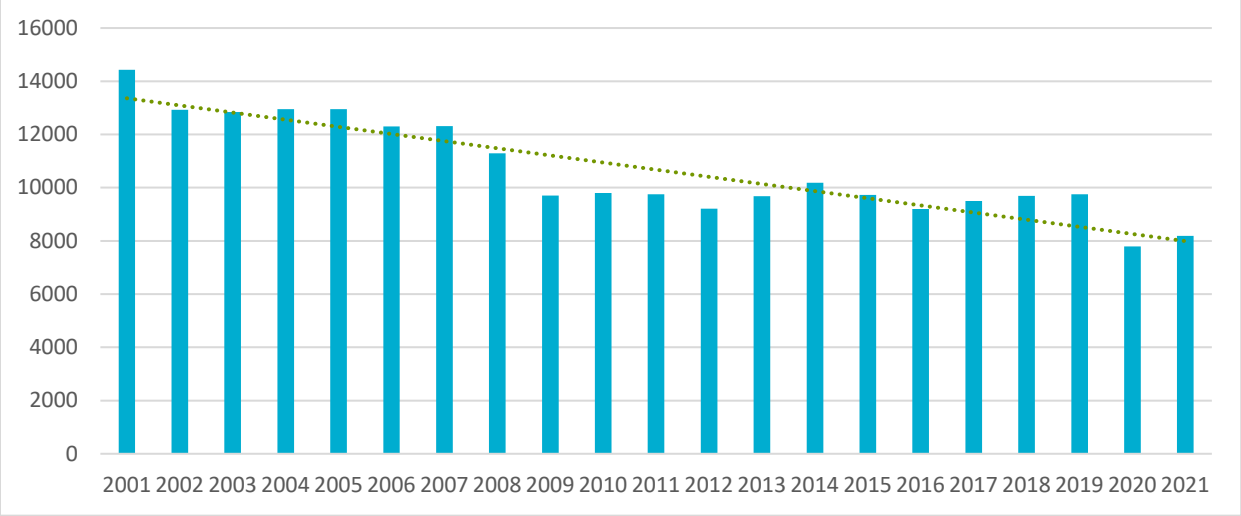
Figure 13: Louisiana Rail Incidents, 2001-2021



Source: FRA

National trends mirror the gradual decline in railroad incidents witnessed in Louisiana over the past two decades. **Figure 14** illustrates this similar trend.

Figure 14: National Rail Incidents, 2001-2021



Source: FRA

Out of the 199 incidents reported in 2021, 74 (37.2%) occurred at highway-grade crossings. The rate of grade crossing incidents to overall reported incidents has remained steady since 2011 (37.8%). Incident data from 2012 to 2021 is presented in **Table 43**.

Table 43: Louisiana Reported Rail Incidents, 2012-2021

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Total
Total Incidents	234	221	224	229	244	257	232	237	206	199	2,521
Fatalities	14	15	22	14	22	12	15	15	16	21	178
Injuries	187	156	144	171	196	185	131	154	134	127	1,779
Trespasser Incidents	16	16	19	17	19	17	22	14	17	20	187

Source: FRA

Note: FRA defines Trespasser as persons who are on the part of railroad property used in railroad operation and whose presence is prohibited, forbidden, or unlawful

2.6.2 Rail Crossings

There are more than 200,000 at-grade crossings in the U.S., with 5,074 in Louisiana. 2,767 (or 54.5%) of these crossings are on public roadways. The rest 45.4% are private crossings located adjacent to waterways, radial property lines, or other private properties. Urban and rural areas across Louisiana have at-grade crossings, also known as highway-rail crossings, where roads and rail infrastructure cross each other at the same grade or level. High-population areas with high volumes of rail and road traffic can necessitate grade-separated crossings where the rail corridor is sunken (underpass) or raised above (overpass) roadways.

2.6.2.1 Rail Crossing Safety Trends

Rail crossings present some of the most dangerous conflicts between motor vehicles and vulnerable road users (bicyclists and pedestrians) with rail traffic at locations on American roads. There were 81 highway-rail crossing incidents in Louisiana in 2020, the most recent full-year data set from the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA). Of these, 37 incidents resulted in injury, with one life lost.[24] Two Louisiana crossings are among the top 20 nationwide crossings by frequency of collisions. These are 303221R in Baton Rouge (18th), shown in **Figure 15**, and

[24] Federal Railroad Administration, Highway/Rail Grade Crossing Incidents webpage: https://railroads.dot.gov/accident-and-incident-reporting/highwayrail-grade-crossing-incidents/highwayrail-grade-crossing (accessed April 2023)

725759B in St Bernard Parish (20th).[25] Each crossing was the site of three crashes in 2021. The location of these crossings of concern are shown in **Figure 16** and **Figure 17**.

Figure 15: Plank Road Grade Crossing, Baton Rouge

Source: DOTD

[25] Federal Railroad Administration, Frequency of Crossing Collisions webpage: *https://safetydata.fra.dot.gov/OfficeofSafety/publicsite/query/qxrtop50.aspx* (accessed April 2023)

Figure 16: Rail Crossing of Concern – Baton Rouge

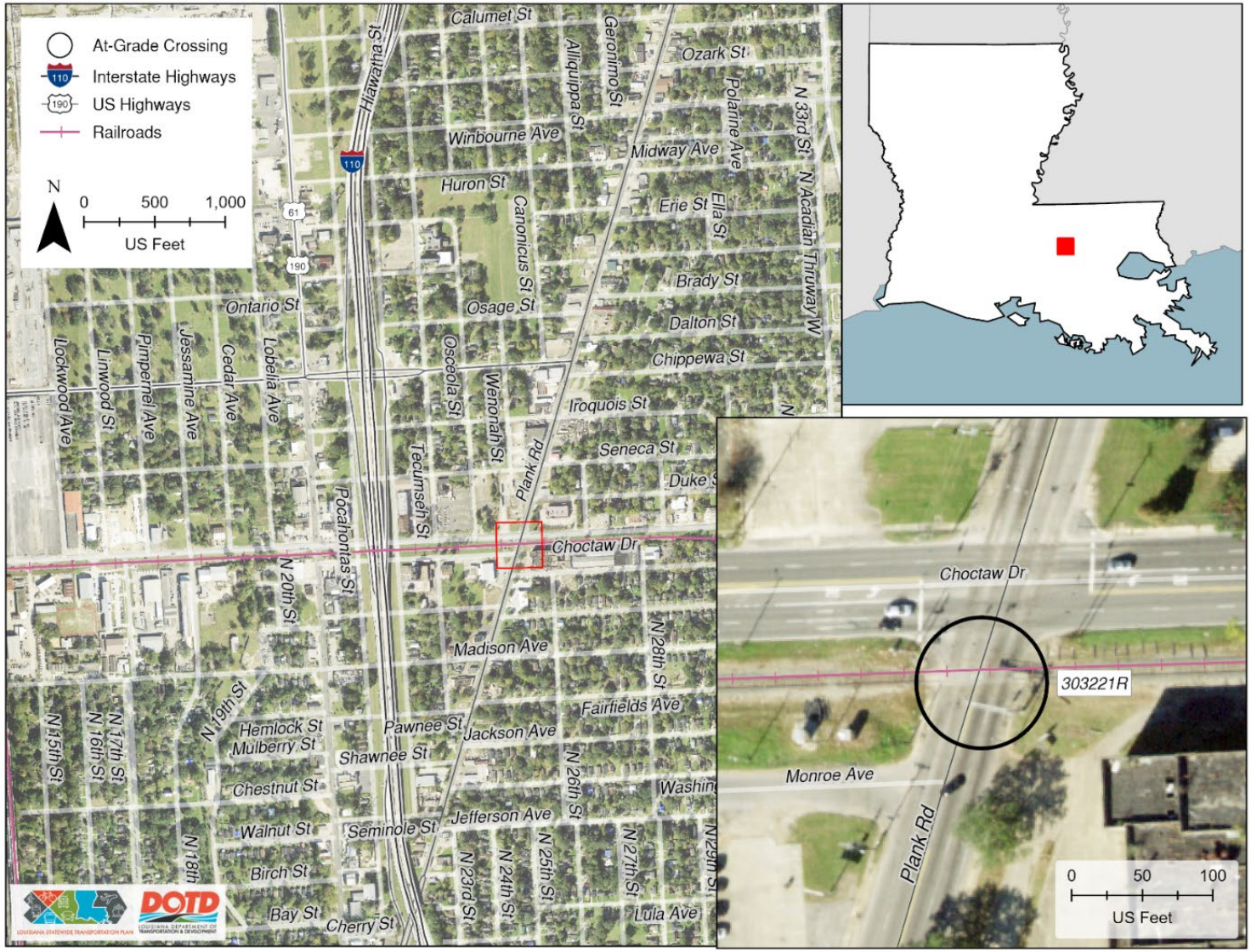


Figure 17: Rail Crossing of Concern - St. Bernard Parish

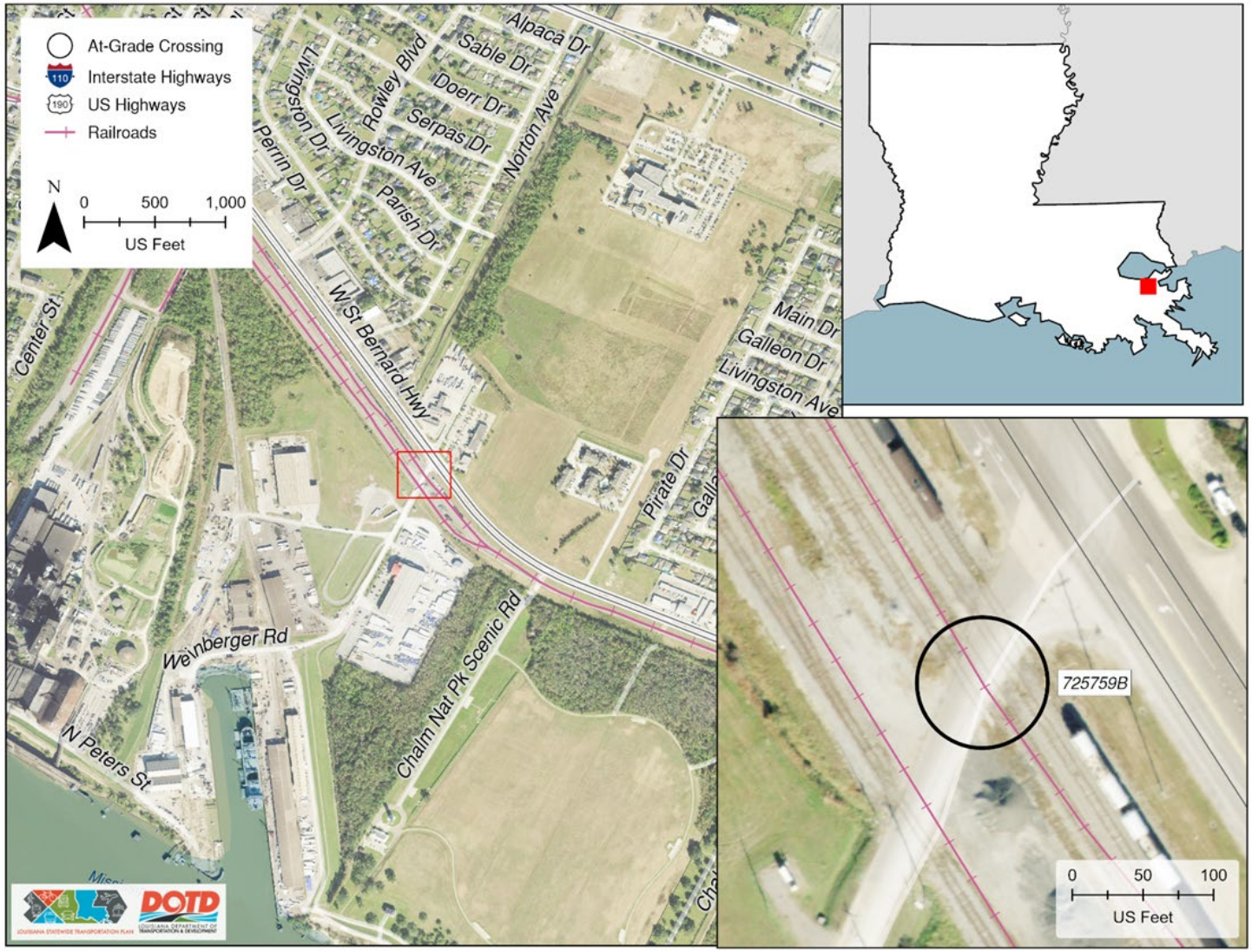


Table 44 highlights at-grade crossing incidents over ten years ending in 2021. Over this time, incidents have fluctuated with a slight downward trend from 2019 to 2021.

Table 44: At-Grade Highway-Rail Crossing Incidents (2012-2021)

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Total
Total Incidents	79	72	83	78	84	87	91	97	81	79	**831**
Public Crossing Incidents	66	70	70	66	73	76	73	81	69	62	**706**
Fatalities	7	6	13	13	10	6	6	6	1	5	**73**
Non-Fatal Injuries	50	31	49	47	53	34	38	36	61	40	**439**

Source: Federal Railroad Administration, Operational Data Tables webpage (accessed April 2023)

Table 45 shows the parishes with more than 100 public highway-rail crossings. Twenty-nine percent of the state's public at-grade crossings are located within these six parishes. Parishes with over 200 total at-grade crossings (private and public) are shown in **Table 46**. An ongoing effort to address safety in Jefferson Parish and Plaquemines Parish, first and fifth most at-grade crossings statewide, respectively, known as the LA 23 NOGC Relocation Study aims to evaluate potential rail alignments of approximately one-half mile of New Orleans Gulf Coast (NOGC) track located within the street right-of-way in the City of Gretna.

Table 45: Parishes with the Most Public Highway-Rail Crossings

Parish	Total
Calcasieu	153
East Baton Rouge	147
Caddo	133
Ouachita	126
Orleans	117
Jefferson	113

Source: Federal Railroad Administration, Total At-Grade Highway-Rail Crossings - Louisiana webpage (accessed April 2023)

Table 46: Parishes with the Most At-Grade Crossings

Parish	Total
Jefferson	267
Orleans	253
East Baton Rouge	250
Calcasieu	225
Plaquemines	202

Source: Federal Railroad Administration, Total At-Grade Highway-Rail Crossings - Louisiana webpage (accessed April 2023)

Beyond exposing the public to freight rail traffic, at-grade crossings disrupt other modes of travel. Blocked crossings occupied by trains cannot be crossed, which may lead to backups along roadways. Resultant congestion and lengthened travel times impact emergency vehicle response times and serve as an economic detriment to local economies. **Table 47** shows the municipalities with the most at-grade crossings, highlighting the potential impacts on urban areas.

Table 47: Top Municipalities with At-Grade Crossings

Municipality	Total
New Orleans	104
Baton Rouge	82
Monroe	73
Shreveport	71
Lake Charles	46

Source: Federal Railroad Administration, Frequency of Crossing Collisions webpage (accessed April 2023)

2.6.2.2 Rail Crossing Funding and Programming

DOTD rail safety-related activities, including all grade crossing and other highway-related activities involving railroads, are conducted within the Rail Safety Unit organized under the Project Development Division within the Office of Engineering. The unit is responsible for evaluating Louisiana's 2,767 public at-grade crossings in support of Louisiana's Operation Life Saver program. Rail Safety Unit staff conduct diagnostic reviews of proposed crossing improvement projects and crossing consolidations/closures implemented through the federal Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP). 30 to 50 rail crossings are improved yearly using funding for highway-rail crossing improvements (Section 130). DOTD also encourages railroads to be proactive and apply for special grants to support safety-related efforts and rail improvements.

Recent and active grade separation projects in Louisiana include:

- LA 1 new bridge at DOW Spur crossing
- LA 3213 Gramercy Bridge over UP Railroad
- LA 397 new bridge at UPRR
- LA 3105 underpass at CPKC south of I-20
- LA 34 bridge over CPKC

2.7 Economic and Environmental Impacts

The railroad industry benefits the economic and environmental well-being of Louisiana by moving goods in an environmentally efficient manner.

2.7.1 Economic Benefits of Rail

Freight railroads and passenger trains form a vital transportation network that facilitates the movement of people and goods in Louisiana. Freight rail is particularly efficient for long travel distances and large volumes of goods due to lower costs, higher capacity, and fewer environmental and safety impacts when compared to trucking. Passenger trains also consume less energy, produce fewer harmful pollutants than either car or air travel, and help reduce congestion on roads and airports.

The efficient movement of goods and people by rail is critical to growing the Louisiana economy. Freight rail in Louisiana connects local businesses to domestic and global markets and provides competitive access to suppliers and customers. Passenger rail service in Louisiana supports economic development by reducing roadway congestion in major metropolitan areas and allowing leisure and business travelers to reach their destinations every year. Together, freight and passenger rail create travel efficiencies that reduce the cost of doing business in the state, supporting Louisiana jobs and driving local and regional economic development.

The overall direct impact of rail on the economy of Louisiana in 2021 is estimated at **$6.9 billion,** with **freight rail contributing with $6,898 million** (or 99.5% of the total direct impact) and **passenger rail contributing with$31.5 million** (or 0.5% of the total direct impact).

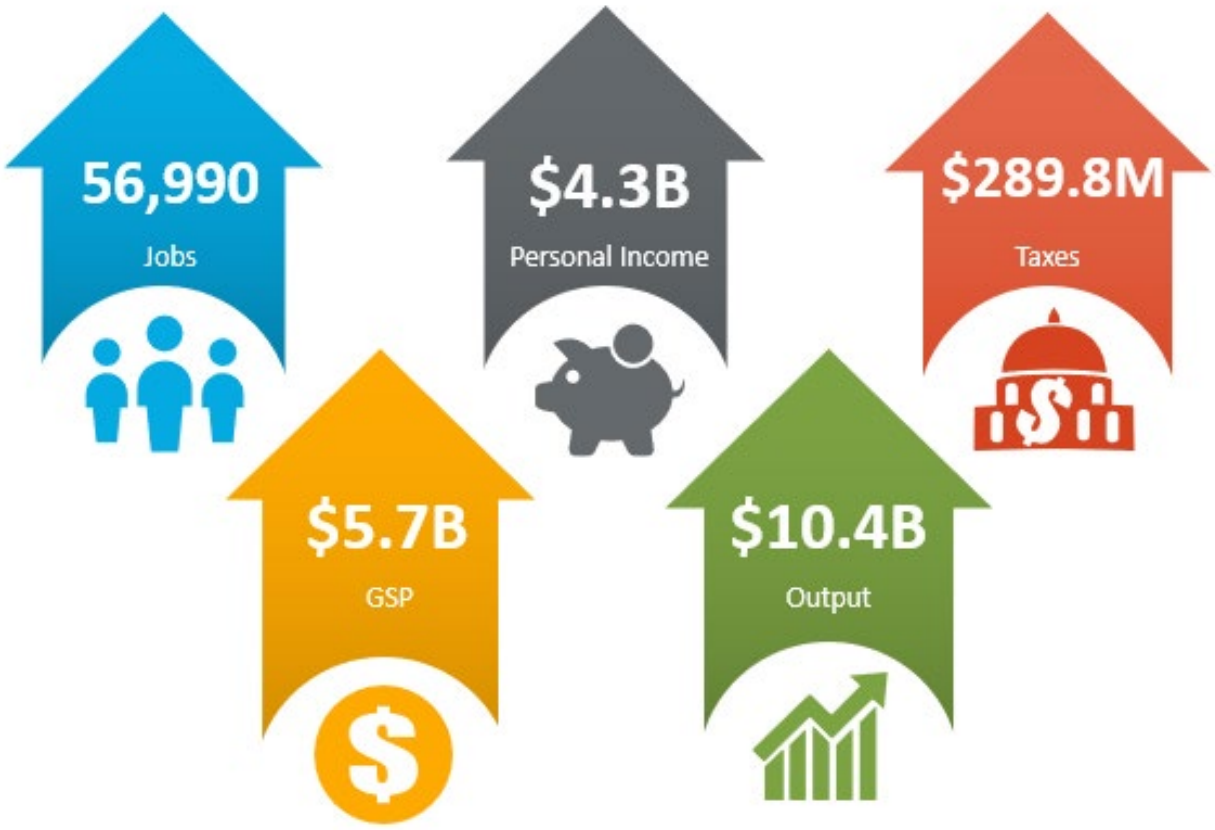
The total (direct, indirect and induced) economic impacts of rail in Louisiana in 2021 are summarized in **Figure 18**. Freight and passenger rail in Louisiana supported **56,990 jobs**, which added **$4.3 billion in personal income** and led to **$5.7 billion in value added** (or **GSP**), **$10.4 billion in economic output** and **$289.8 million in local and state taxes** in the state.

The analysis also indicates that **every direct job in the freight rail industry supports 5.8 jobs in the state's economy** (the original job and 4.8 additional jobs) and that **every direct job in the**

passenger rail industry supports 2.0 jobs in the state's economy (the original job and one additional job).

More details on the economic impact analysis methodology and results can be found in the supporting **Tech Memo 1: Economic Impact Analysis of Rail.**

Figure 18: Total (Direct, Indirect, and Induced) Economic Contribution of Freight and Passenger Rail in Louisiana in 2021



Source: Cambridge Systematics Analysis using the REMI TranSight and Tax-PI Models for Louisiana.

2.7.2 Environmental Benefits of Rail

Rail transportation provides several environmental benefits that align with carbon reduction and climate action goals:

- Greenhouse Gas Reduction: The Louisiana Climate Action Plan has committed to reducing its greenhouse gas emissions by 40% from 2005 goals.

  - Rail lowers GHG emissions by up to 75% on average. AAR analysis of federal data finds that if 25% of the truck traffic moving at least 750 miles went by rail instead, annual GHG emissions would fall by approximately 13.6 million tons.

- Increase efficiency in freight transport: The Louisiana Climate Action Plan includes the goal of maximizing efficiency of energy intensive freight transit.
  - Railroads are the most fuel-efficient way to move freight over land. It would have taken approximately 2.1 million additional trucks to handle the 37.2 million tons of freight that originated by rail in Louisiana in 2021.
- Passenger Travel: The Louisiana Climate Action Plan includes the goal of reducing Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT).
  - Amtrak Intercity passenger rail provides an accessible means of travel between New Orleans and other large urban centers. This is especially important in Louisiana as access to airports is limited throughout the state.
  - Increases transportation accessibility.
  - Train travel produces less GHG emissions per passenger than roadway travel for trips under 700 miles
- Environmental Justice: Expanded passenger ridership provides an accessible means of travels for populations without access to a car, reducing barriers to economic advancement.

2.8 Trends and Forecasts

The following sections discuss factors that could affect the rail needs of the state and provide baseline data and future projections for key rail trends. A base year of 2021 from STB's Carload Waybill data was used in discussing freight rail-related data such as traffic volumes and commodity movements. Freight rail projections came from S&P's Transearch forecast. Other data presented in this section covering topics such as demographics, employment, and passenger rail ridership used the most recent data available from verifiable sources, such as Amtrak, Census Bureau, Bureau of Labor Statistics, and Bureau of Transportation Statistics.

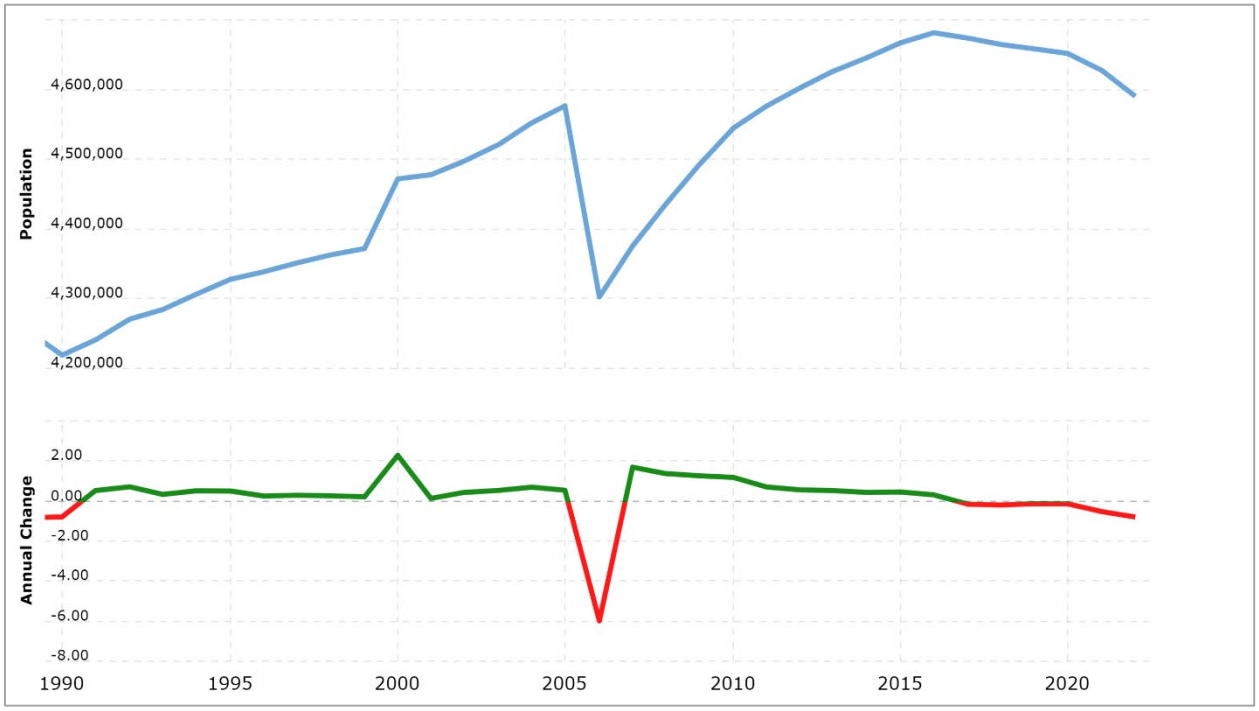
2.8.1 Demographic and Economic Growth Factors

Both freight and passenger rail use is affected by demographic and economic factors. Population trends are important for predicting passenger rail demand in the future. Analysis of economic factors such as the type of industries that are growing and shrinking is important for DOTD to understand where rail investments are most needed to meet future demand while also maximizing the benefits generated using public funds.

2.8.1.1 Population

Population is a key determinant of transportation demand. The number and geographic distribution of people and their socio-demographic characteristics drive the number and types of trips made on the transportation network. As shown in **Figure 19**, the population in Louisiana steadily increased between 1990 and 2005, a growth rate of 8.4%, before dropping 6% in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. Year-over-year growth similar to what was witnessed pre-Katrina occurred between 2006 and 2016. However, since an all-time population peak in 2016 (4.68 million), the state's population has declined each year through 2022.

Figure 19: Louisiana Population Change, 1990-2022



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2023

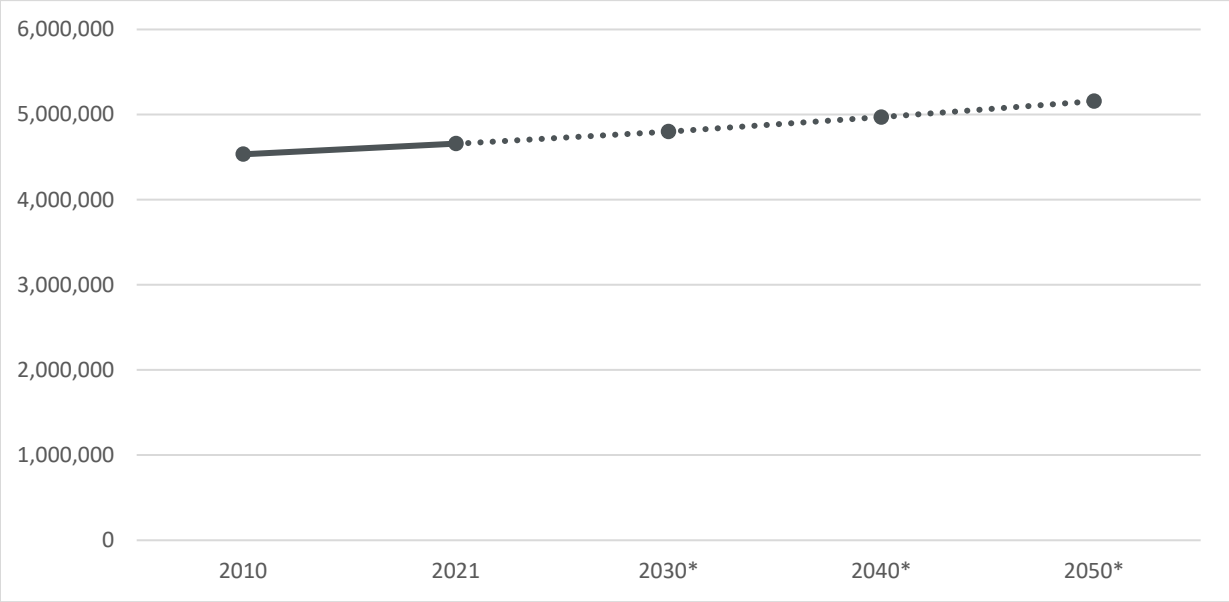
Population Projections

Louisiana's population is expected to grow from approximately 4.6 million (2021) to 5 million by 2040[26]. **Figure 20** shows population growth from 2010 to 2021 and projected population through 2050. Population projections generated by the model identified the highest annual population growth rate from 2021 through 2055 will occur in Ascension Parish (1.4%), Livingston Parish (1.3%), and St. Tammany Parish (1.0%). Within this moderate growth, there

[26] Based on population projections used in the Statewide Travel Demand Model (shown in Figure 2).

are two key trends identified that will impact transportation: the population is concentrating away from rural areas into more urban centers[27], and the population is aging.

Figure 20: Louisiana Population Growth and Projections by Decade, 2010-2050



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Woods & Poole Economics, REMI - Regional Economics Model, Inc. Data Available at the State Level Only, MPO Projections - This data is from each MPO in the state covering select parishes in the state.

** 2030-2050 are population projection estimates.*

A separate technical analysis of Louisiana's population was undertaken by the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority (CPRA) whose mandate is to develop, implement, and enforce a comprehensive coastal protection and restoration master plan. The following are key takeaways from the population projections (2020-2070) created for CPRAs 2023 Coastal Master Plan[28]:

- Many block groups[29] across Louisiana are expected to decline 0 to 2,000 persons over the next 50 years.
- Highest rate of population growth is expected in suburban Shreveport, Baton Rouge, and Lafayette

[27] U.S. Census Bureau urban and rural classification https://www.census.gov/newsroom/press-kits/2022/urban-rural-classification.html

[28] Coastal Master Plan, *Louisiana Population Projections* (2021)

[29] Census Block Groups are statistical divisions of census tracts, are generally defined to contain between 600 and 3,000 people, and are used to present data and control block numbering.

- The largest population increase through 2070 is expected to occur in the Baton Rouge region.

2.8.1.2 Population Trends

Population Concentrations

The population of Louisiana increased by 2.7% between 2010 and 2020. Over this same time period, thirteen parishes experienced population growth that outpaced the statewide rate. The fastest growing parishes are shown in **Table 48**. Although not included below, Orleans Parish (11.7% growth rate) experienced the greatest overall growth in population with over 40,000 additional residents being added over the decade.

Table 48: Parishes with Highest Rates of Population Growth, 2010 to 2020

Parish	Percent Change
St. Bernard	21.9%
Ascension	18.0%
West Baton Rouge	14.4%
St. Tammany	13.2%
Calcasieu	12.5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 and 2020 Decennial Census

Jefferson and East Baton Rouge parishes, the only parishes with populations exceeding Orleans Parish, combined to add about 24,800 residents between 2010 and 2020.[30] Louisiana's three most populated parishes accounted for 52% of the population gain occuring over the decade, growing from 26.8% of the population in 2010 to 27.2% in 2020. **Table 49** illustrates the difference in population growth between 2010 and 2020 for the state's most populated parishes – populations over 100,000 in 2020 – and those with smaller populations. Louisiana's most populated parishes grew by over 180,000 residents, while all others experienced a net decrease of nearly 59,000. As a result the share of Louisiana's population living in parishes with populations over 100,000 has grown from 66% in 2010 to over 68% in 2020.

[30] U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 and 2020 Decennial Census

Table 49: Trends in High and Low Population Parishes

Parishes	Population, 2020	Population Change (2010-2020)	Share of State Population, 2010	Share of State Population, 2020
14 Largest*	3,173,171	+183,054	66.0%	68.1%
50 Smallest**	1,484,586	-58,669	34.0%	31.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 and 2020 Decennial Census

** Parish population greater than 100,000 in 2020, ranging from East Baton Rouge (456,781) to Ascension (126,500).*

*** Parishes with populations below 100,000 in 2020.*

Six parishes experienced growth at a lower rate than the state between 2010 and 2020, while 45 parishes declined in population. Parishes where the population decreased by the highest rate are shown in **Table 50**. Caddo Parish experienced the largest overall reduction in population with a loss of 17,000 residents. With a population of 237,848 in 2020, Caddo Parish ranks seventh in the state for total population and was the only parish in the top ten for population to have a net loss. Tensas Parish, in addition to experiencing the highest rate of population decline, is the lowest populated parish in Louisiana.

Table 50: Parishes with Highest Rates of Population Decline, 2010 to 2020

Parish	Percent Change
Tensas	-21.0%
Cameron	-18.2%
Claiborne	-17.6%
Madison	-17.2%
Red River	-16.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 and 2020 Decennial Census

Population trends analyzed above will drive freight and passenger rail demand as industries, businesses, and travelers consolidate in and near already heavily populated areas. Parishes with lower populations are largely shrinking, a trend that is expected to continue through the coming decades. The dispersion of population within the state is one of the major reasons why the proposed New Orleans to Baton Rouge passenger rail service and New Orleans Gateway project are among the most important rail projects across Louisiana.

Aging Population

The geographic dispersion of Louisiana's population is not the only factor with a bearing on freight and passenger rail demand. The state's population is also aging. Between 2020 and 2040, the share of residents in Louisiana over age 65 is expected to grow from 15% to 17%. The median age of residents will increase from 37.4 years to 38.9. Additionally, by 2040, 4.8% of Louisiana's population will be over the age of 80.

As Louisiana's population ages, some may lose their ability to drive and will become more reliant on intercity passenger rail to meet their travel needs. There will also be shifts in where freight is shipped based on regional distribution of productivity and business. Locations where a high rate of residents are aging out of the workforce paired with low or no population gain may result in industrial producers seeking to relocate closer to their workforce. Industry consolidating in urban and suburban communities across the state would put stress on existing rail infrastructure, some of which is already operating at or above capacity. Such a consolidation of businesses relying on freight rail in more populated areas would further require investments into rail infrastructure including industrial lead track, capacity enhancements, and crossing improvements such as crossing consolidations or implementing new warning devices. Population demographics trends will continue to be monitored by DOTD to inform decisions as they relate to rail planning.

2.8.2 Employment & Personal Income

Factors such as wages, income, and poverty rate provide a snapshot of the economic conditions that influence rail transportation. A strong economy equates to more expendable income that could be used for recreational or business rail travel and to purchase goods shipped by rail. Conversely, economic decline likely means fewer passenger trips or goods being purchased. Despite these factors, areas of Louisiana where poverty rates are higher and wages lower relative to the statewide average are the types of communities that stand to gain the most from expanded passenger rail service in the state. This section explores the personal economic elements at play that factor into decisions on where new passenger services are needed and what freight investments would generate the greatest public good.

2.8.2.1 Wage Growth

Wages in Louisiana have been growing year-over-year. **Table 51** shows annual average weekly wage growth of between 2.6% and 5.4% for five consecutive years (2018-2022). 2019 experienced the lowest amount of annual growth from the previous year (2.6%) while 2022 saw the strongest growth over this period at 5.4%. Overall wage – measured as annual average weekly income – grew by 17.7% between 2018 and 2022 in Louisiana. Nationally, wages grew from $1,100 to $1,353 per week (18.7%).[31] These increases demonstrate a positive economic environment where the average Louisiana citizen might have more disposable income to spend on goods and rail travel than they did the year before.

[31] BLS, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (2022)

Table 51: Louisiana Annual Average Weekly Wage

Year	Annual Avg. Weekly Wage	Annual Avg. Weekly Wage Change Over the Year	Annual Avg. Weekly Wage % Change Over the Year
2018	$931	$31	3.4%
2019	$955	$24	2.6%
2020	$1,005	$50	5.2%
2021	$1,041	$36	3.6%
2022	$1,097	$56	5.4%

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (2022)

Real Median Income

Real median household income is the inflation-adjusted amount of money the median household in Louisiana earns annually. A "median household" falls in the middle of all households across the state, with an even amout of households earning more and less over a given year. Since 2012, this number has grown by over 20%, although unevenly. Some years saw large increases, with 2013 and 2018 seeing average income jumps of $8,420 and $6,390, respectively. Conversely, some years saw large income drops, with 2014 seeing a decline of $5,660 and 2016 showing a decline of $4,960. Overall, the cumulative increase of 20% from 2012 to 2022, as shown in **Table 52**, is a positive trend for Louisiana households and the entire Louisiana economy.

Table 52: Louisiana Real Median Household Income, 2012 - 2022

Year	Real Median Income	Annual Avg. Median Income Change Year-Over-Year	Annual Avg. Median Income % Change Year-Over-Year
2012	$48,530	($2,930)	-5.69%
2013	$56,950	$8,420	17.35%
2014	$51,290	($5,660)	-9.94%
2015	$55,590	$4,300	8.38%
2016	$50,630	($4,960)	-8.92%
2017	$51,370	$740	1.46%
2018	$57,760	$6,390	12.44%
2019	$58,890	$1,130	1.96%
2020	$57,700	($1,190)	-2.02%
2021	$61,690	$3,990	6.92%
2022	$58,330	($3,360)	-5.45%
Total % Change 2012 - 2022			**20.19%**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2021 CPI-U-RS Adjusted Dollars, Not Seasonally Adjusted)

Poverty Rate

Louisiana's poverty rate has remained within one percentage point over the past five years (2018-2022) as shown in **Table 53**. The latest available snapshot of the statewide poverty rate in 2022 matches that of 2018 prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Table 53: Louisiana Annual Average Poverty Rate, 2018-2022

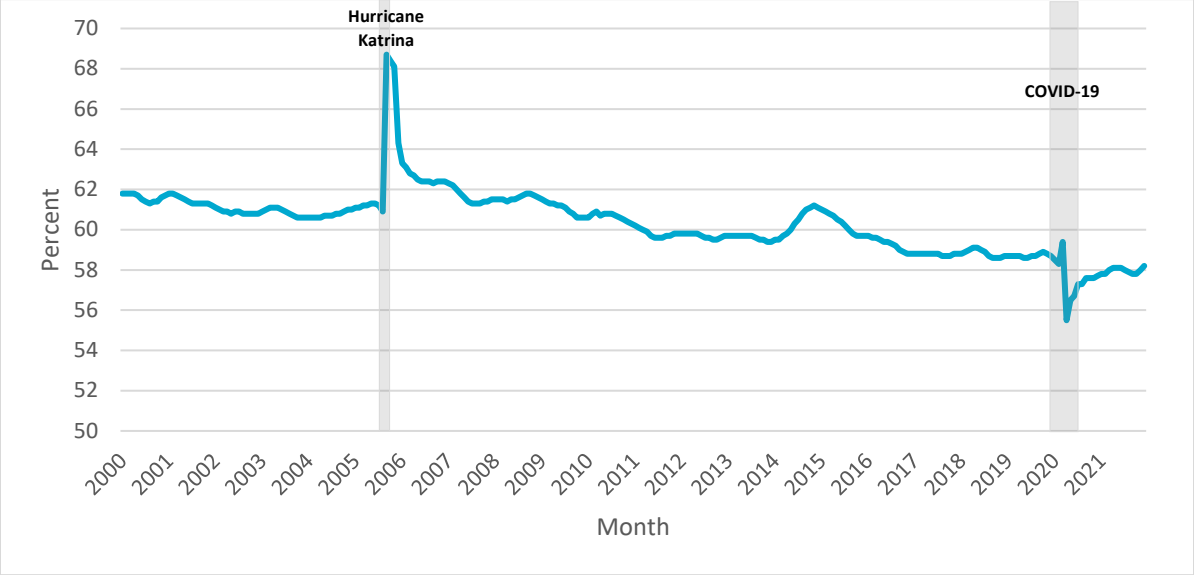
Year	Poverty Rate
2018	18.6
2019	19.0
2020	18.6
2021	19.6
2022	18.6

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-year estimates, 2018-2022

2.8.2.2 Workforce

Louisiana's workforce participation is quickly rebounding from the COVID-19 pandemic as seen in **Figure 21**, and is currently made up of approximately 3.6 million people. The spike in 2005 illustrates the influx of recovery workers from within (individuals previously out of the labor force) and outside of Louisiana following Hurricane Katrina.

Figure 21: Labor Force Participation Rate by Month, 2000-2021



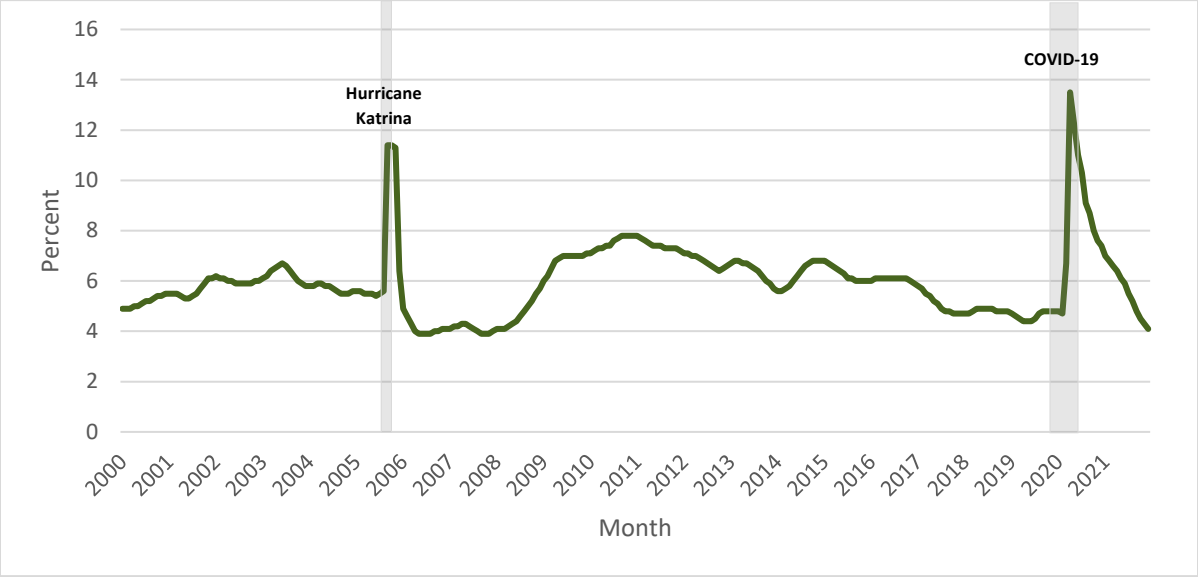
Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

Unemployment

The unemployment rate has declined steadily since a peak in 2012 as shown in **Figure 22**. The COVID-19 pandemic saw a rapid rise in unemployment followed by a steady fall. The

unemployment rate is now lower than it was before the COVID-19 pandemic, signaling that this aspect of the economy has recovered.

Figure 22: Unemployment Rate by Month, 2000-2021



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

2.8.3 Industrial Outlook

The performance of industrial sectors has repercussions for many different aspects of life in Louisiana. Which industrial sectors are growing in employment or productivity today may indicate how rail demand will change in the future. Certain sectors employ a higher share of Louisiana's population compared to the country as a whole. This section explores the sectors that grow Louisiana's economy and drive freight demand.

2.8.3.1 High-Employment Industries

The U.S Census Bureau releases monthly data on employment across 19 industrial sectors. The North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) sectors shown in **Table 54** are groupings of industries that fit within the sector. The table provides the annual average for the three years shown (2001, 2011, and 2021).

The greatest share of the workforce is employed in the Health Care and Social Assistance sector (17.75%). This sector was second largest in 2001 behind Retail Trade which has declined over the past two decades. Despite shrinking, Retail Trade still has the second highest rate of employment (14.20%), followed by Accommodation and Food Services (11.36%). All other sectors make up less than 10% of employment in Louisiana. The rate of workers in the Health Care and Social Assistance sector in Louisiana (17.75%) mirrors employment trends nationally (16.31%).

Louisiana has a higher rate of employment by sector for seven of the 19 NAICS sectors compared to national employment totals. These sectors are Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction, Utilities, Construction, Real Estate and Rental and Leasing, Health Care and Social Assistance, Accommodation and Food Service, and Retail Trade.

Table 54: Employment by Job Sector Over Time (2001, 2011, 2021)

NAICS Sector*	2001		2011		2021	
	Number of Jobs	Percent of Workforce	Number of Jobs	Percent of Workforce	Number of Jobs	Percent of Workforce
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	14,202	0.95%	9,894	0.67%	8,545	0.56%
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	48,087	3.22%	50,034	3.40%	28,109	1.83%
Utilities	11,370	0.76%	9,097	0.67%	8,813	0.57%
Construction	127,704	8.56%	121,054	8.23%	128,724	8.39%
Wholesale Trade	76,479	5.13%	70,088	4.76%	64,943	4.23%
Information	27,772	1.86%	24,345	1.65%	25,436	1.66%
Finance and Insurance	54,959	3.68%	55,792	3.79%	54,174	3.53%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	35,008	2.35%	30,103	2.05%	29,071	1.89%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	65,197	4.37%	76,122	5.17%	91,728	5.98%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	28,233	1.89%	27,581	1.87%	22,201	1.45%
Admin. And Support and Waste Management and Remediation	88,095	5.90%	90,050	6.12%	105,892	6.90%
Educational Services	18,387	1.23%	23,764	1.62%	32,486	2.12%
Health Care and Social Assistance	187,799	12.59%	228,530	15.53%	272,254	17.75%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	38,951	2.61%	27,305	1.86%	23,003	1.50%
Accommodation and Food Services	146,853	9.84%	160,069	10.88%	174,336	11.36%
Other Services	51,649	3.46%	44,356	3.02%	44,480	2.90%
Manufacturing	176,317	11.82%	141,101	9.59%	129,635	8.45%
Retail Trade	227,709	15.26%	214,027	14.55%	217,871	14.20%
Transportation and Warehousing	67,154	4.50%	67,863	4.61%	72,472	4.72%
Total	**1,491,925**	**100%**	**1,471,175**	**100%**	**1,534,173**	**100%**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau – Quarterly Workforce Indicators

** North American Industry Classification System two-digit sector code*

2.8.3.2 Critical Industries

The following industries play major roles in the state economy and rely heavily on freight rail service. In addition to employing workers across the state, these industrial sectors ship large quantities and/or high values of freight by rail. Freight rail commodities are tracked in North America using Standard Transportation Commodity Codes (STCC). Numeric STCC codes are categorized into two-digit groupings of similar commodities that are further subdivided to provide more specificity on the materials and products being shipped. Commodities shipped by the major industries described below are further explored in **Section 2.3.3.**

Chemicals, Plastics, and Rubber

Chemicals, plastics, and rubber commodities encompass various essential products in multiple industries. For instance, dyes and pigments play crucial roles in creative sectors; agricultural chemicals and fertilizers are essential for enhancing agricultural productivity; tires, inner tubes, and rubber are vital components in the automotive industry; and drugs are necessary in the medical field.

There are 130 chemical, plastic, and rubber-related businesses in Louisiana that employ nearly 3,600 people. The leading employers are the plastic fabricating company Trade Construction, the gas supplier Red Ball Oxygen, and the plastic model manufacturer Continental Structural Plastics. These three companies provide 25% of the total employment in this sector.

Freight classified in the *Plastics and Synthetic Resins* category is the number one commodity by both tonnage and value that moves through Louisiana for all flow directions. *Plastics and Synthetic Resins* account for 63% of the value of all exports from the state and 41.7% of total tonnage exported.

Oil, Gas, and Coal

Louisiana hosts 351 energy-related businesses, collectively providing nearly 3,800 employment opportunities within the state. A substantial majority, over 85%, of these businesses are involved in oil and gas production. The leading companies in terms of local employment are the oilfield services company Schlumberger, the petroleum management and operating contractor company Fluor Federal Petroleum Operations, and the privately-owned oil producer Justiss Oil Company, Inc.

Bituminous coal is the number one commodity imported and transported through Louisiana and is the second in annual tonnage on the state's rail network. Coal accounted for a quarter of imported rail freight tonnage in 2021.

Other Top Freight Rail Industries

After *Bituminous Coal* and *Plastic and Synthetic Resins* there is a precipitous drop-off in the value and tonnage of other commodities moved by rail. *Grain* (8%), *Miscellaneous Industrial Organic Compounds* (6%), and *Potassium or Sodium Compound* (4%) are the next most common commodities moved by tonnage in all directions. When examining value, *FAK* (freight of all

kinds)[32] *Shipments* (9%), *Motor Vehicles* (7%), *Chemical Preparations, NEC* (not elsewhere classified) (5%), and *Miscellaneous Industrial Organic Chemicals* (4%) round out the top commodities moved in all directions.

2.9 Future Freight Rail Demand

2.9.1 Directional Flow

Table 55 summarizes historical rail freight volumes for 2021, along with a projection for 2050 on the basis of a forecast developed by S&P Global. Notably, by 2050, there is a significant increase in outbound volumes, and very small growth in inbound volumes on a tonnage basis. Intrastate and through freight flows also experienced growth, albeit at a more modest rate. On the basis of commodity value, 2050 is projected to witness an increase in rail volumes, nearly doubling in value for outbound and through freight flows. This implies a profound shift in trade patterns characterized by an increased use of rail transportation for exports in comparison to imports. The difference in increase of inbound tonnage compared to value indicates that Louisiana will import more expensive products in 2050.

Table 55: Louisiana Rail Freight by Direction, 2021 Actual and 2050 Forecast

	Tonnage (Million Tons)			Value (Billion US$)		
Direction	2021	2050	% Change	2021	2050	% Change
Inbound	34.7	35.1	1%	22.8	33.5	47%
Outbound	34.4	62.0	80%	55.8	104.4	87%
Intrastate	7.3	9.2	26%	10.4	15.5	49%
Through	60.8	78.9	30%	91.2	160.4	76%
Total	**137.2**	**185.1**	**35%**	**180.1**	**313.8**	**74%**

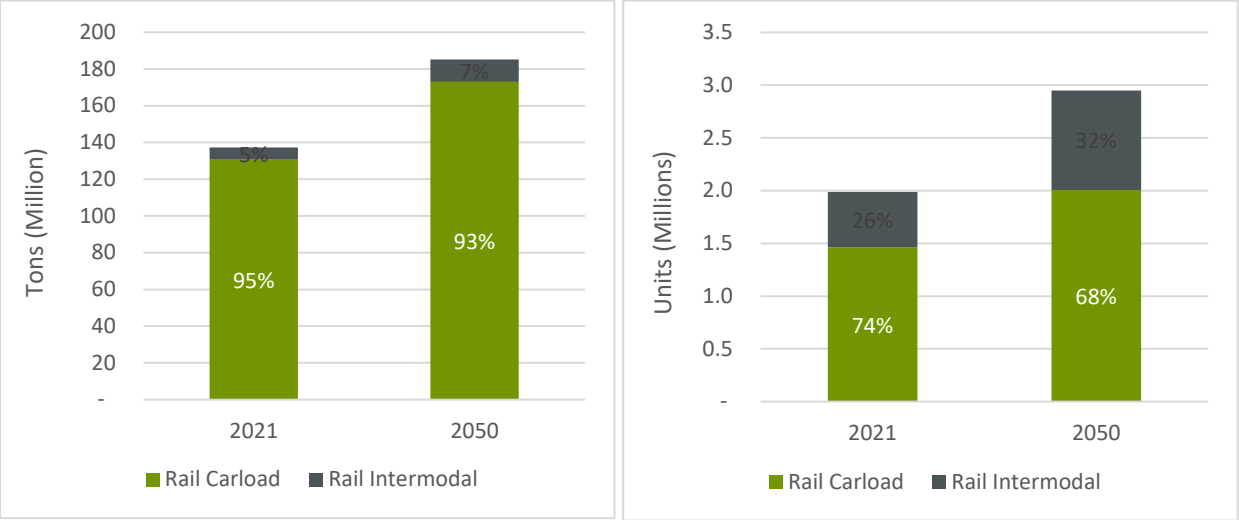
Source: STB Carload Waybill Sample data, 2021, S&P Forecast.

2.9.2 Carload and Intermodal Freight

In 2021, rail carloads accounted for the majority of freight volumes, comprising 95% of the total tonnage, with rail intermodal making up the remaining 5% (see **Figure 23**). According to the 2050 projection, carload traffic is expected to remain dominant, representing 93% of the total, with rail intermodal at 7%. Notably, the total tonnage is anticipated to grow by 35%, increasing from 137 million tons in 2021 to 185 million tons in 2050. On a unit basis, projections are similar from 2021 to 2050, with 74% of total units being rail carloads and the rest intermodal.

[32] FAK is a pricing tool that groups freight classification ranges using a single rate. This commodity category is typically associated with intermodal container shipments.

Figure 23: Freight Volumes in Tons (left), and Units (right) by Type, 2021 Actual and 2050 Forecast

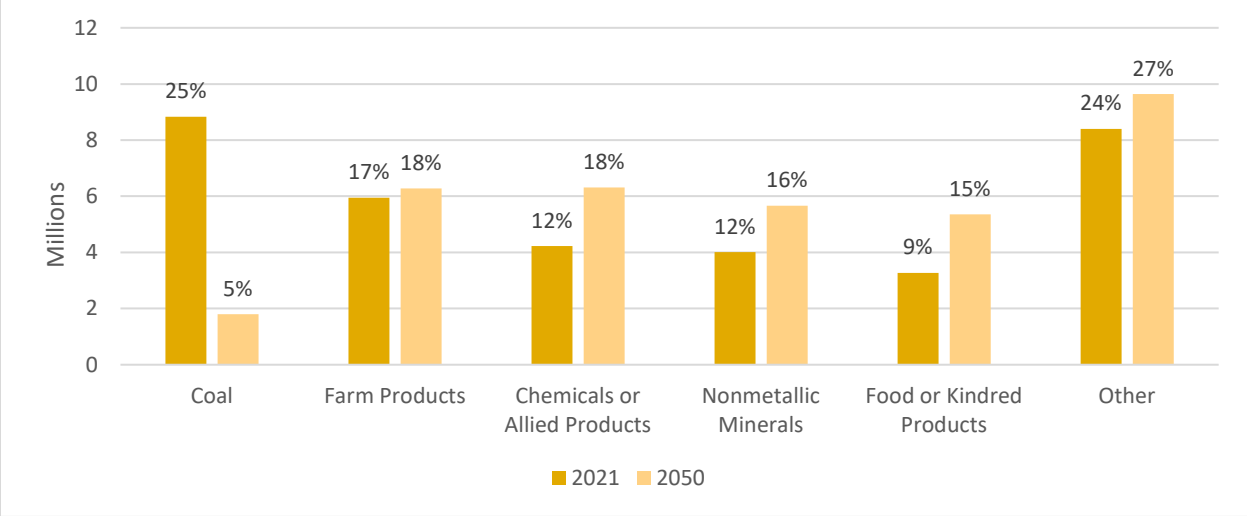


Source: STB Carload Waybill Sample data, 2021, S&P Forecast.

2.9.3 Top Commodities

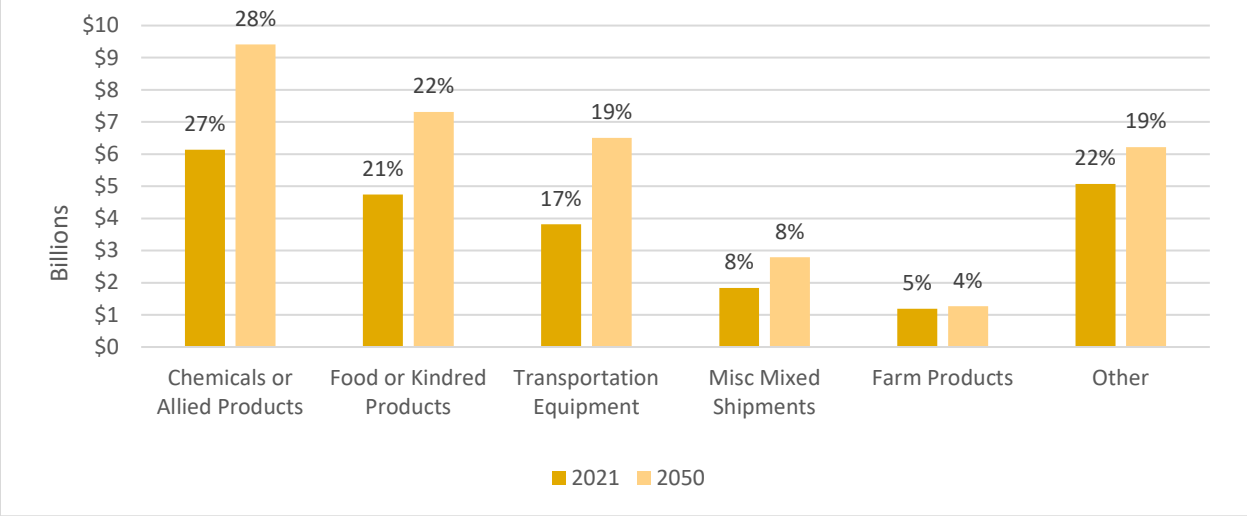
Figure 24 through **Figure 31** reveal the top commodities by direction for 2021 and a projection for 2050 in terms of tonnage and value (US$). As noted previously, in 2021 the leading **inbound** commodities by tonnage consisted of *Coal*, *Farm Products*, *Chemicals or Allied Products*, *Nonmetallic Minerals*, and *Food or Kindred Products*. Through 2050 some shifts in these rankings are anticipated to occur. What is not expected to change is the steadily growing dominance of *Chemicals or Allied Products* on both a tonnage and value basis, and the disappearance of coal from the ranks as a top commodity on a tonnage basis due to decreasing coal demand and increasing competition from natural gas. For inbound traffic, *Transportation Equipment* and *Miscellaneous Mixed Shipments* (intermodal) make it into the top five on a value basis, along with continued growth in *Chemicals or Allied Products*, *Nonmetallic Minerals*, and *Food or Kindred Products*.

Figure 24: Louisiana Top Commodities by Tonnage, Inbound, 2021 Actual and 2050 Forecast



Source: STB Carload Waybill Sample data, 2021, S&P Forecast.

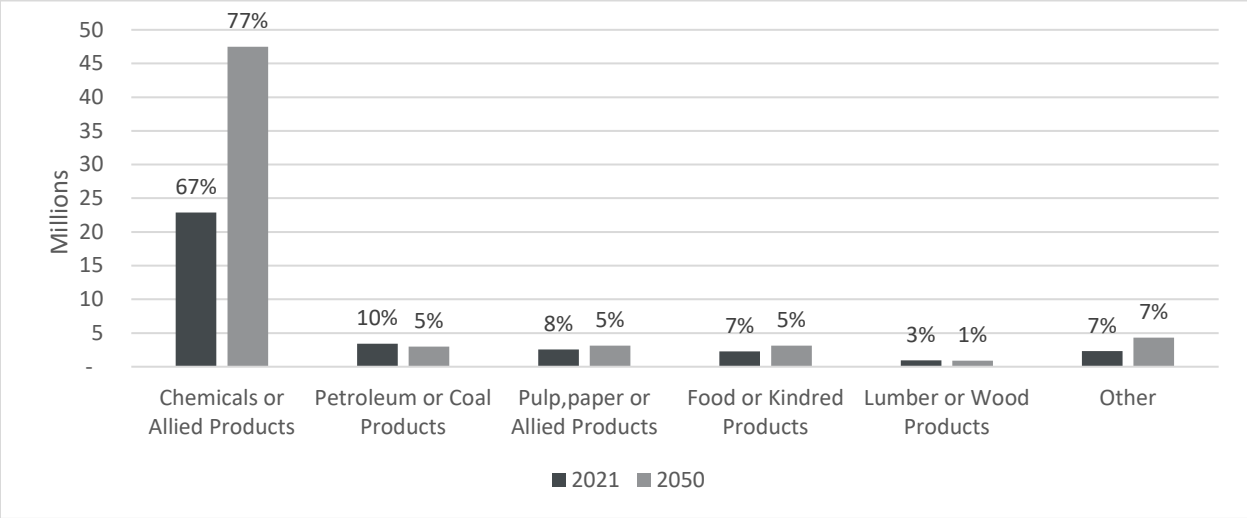
Figure 25: Louisiana Top Commodities by Value, Inbound, 2021 Actual and 2050 Forecast



Source: STB Carload Waybill Sample data, 2021, S&P Forecast.

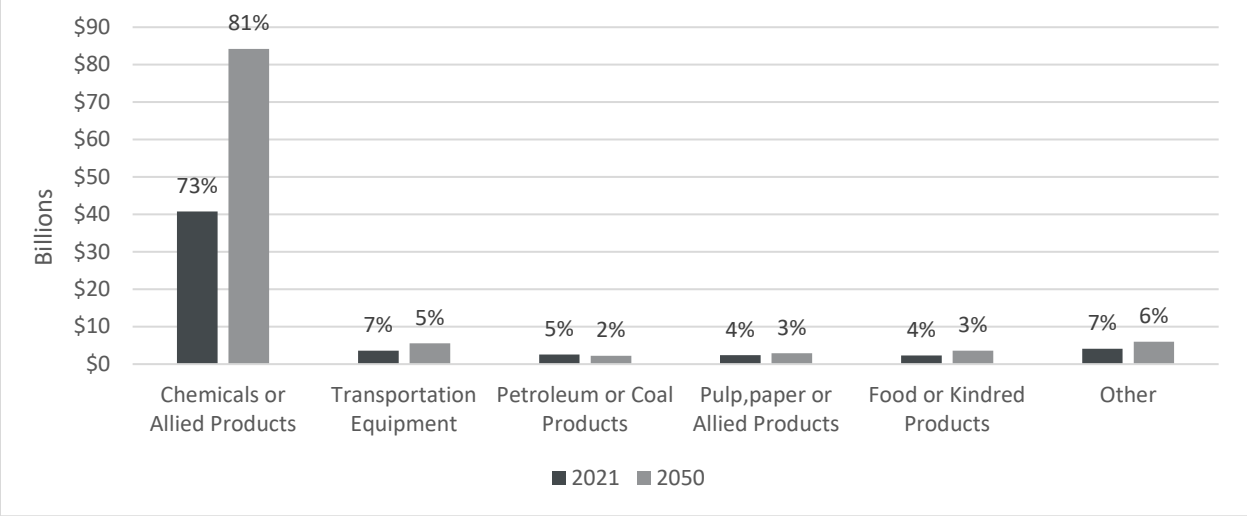
Particularly striking is the sheer dominance of *Chemicals and Allied Products* among **outbound traffic** in both tonnage and value. By 2050, chemicals are projected to account for more than three out of four rail shipments from Louisiana locations on a tonnage basis, and four out of five shipments on a value basis. Although other commodities are expected to make significant gains as well, their volumes will remain modest compared to chemicals.

Figure 26: Louisiana Top Commodities by Tonnage, Outbound, 2021 Actual and 2050 Forecast



Source: STB Carload Waybill Sample data, 2021, S&P Forecast.

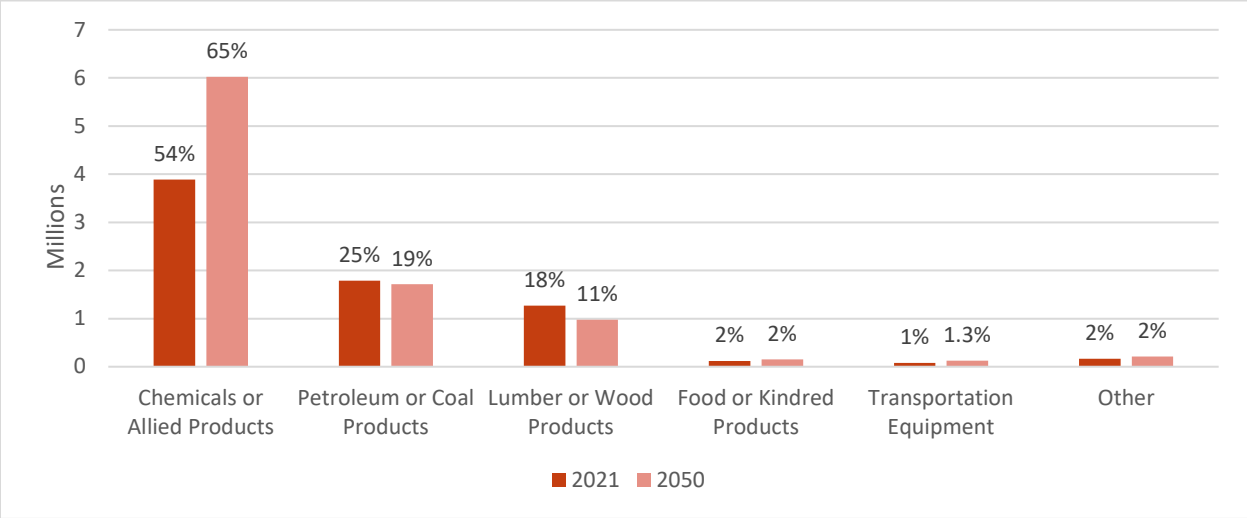
Figure 27: Louisiana Top Commodities by Value, Outbound, 2021 Actual and 2050 Forecast



Source: STB Carload Waybill Sample data, 2021, S&P Forecast.

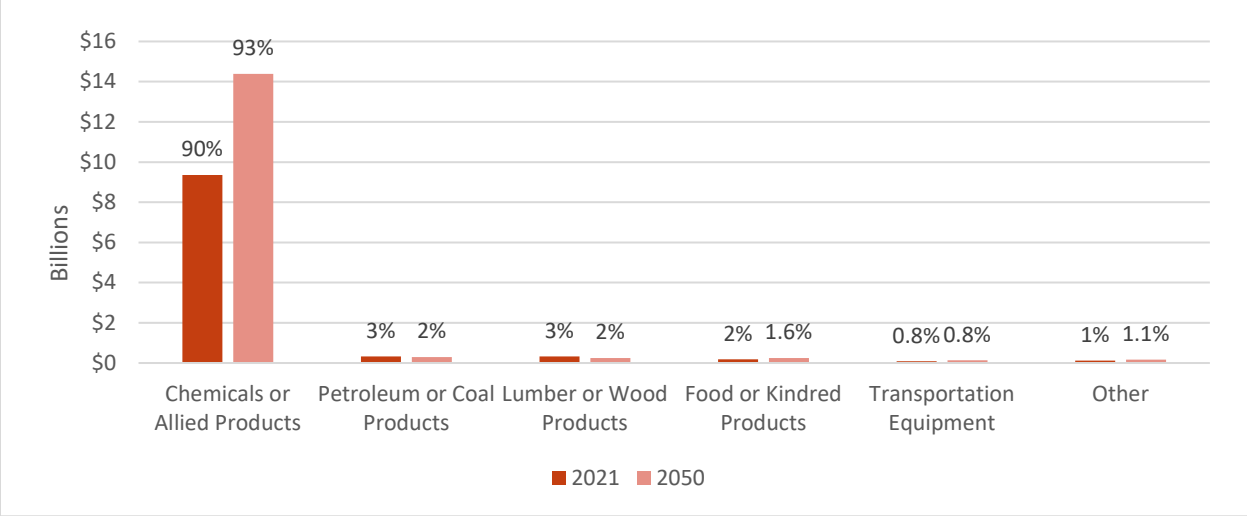
The story is the same for **intrastate traffic**, which overwhelmingly consists of *Chemical or Allied Products*, followed by the closely-related *Petroleum and Coal Products*. Most striking is the projection that, on a value basis, *Chemicals and Allied Products* are expected to account for 93% of all rail intrastate shipments by 2050. Furthermore, virtually all the volume growth is expected to come from *Chemicals and Allied Products*, with other major commodities either flat or declining.

Figure 28: Louisiana Top Commodities by Tonnage, Intrastate, 2021 Actual and 2050 Forecast



Source: STB Carload Waybill Sample data, 2021, S&P Forecast.

Figure 29: Louisiana Top Commodities by Value, Intrastate, 2021 Actual and 2050 Forecast

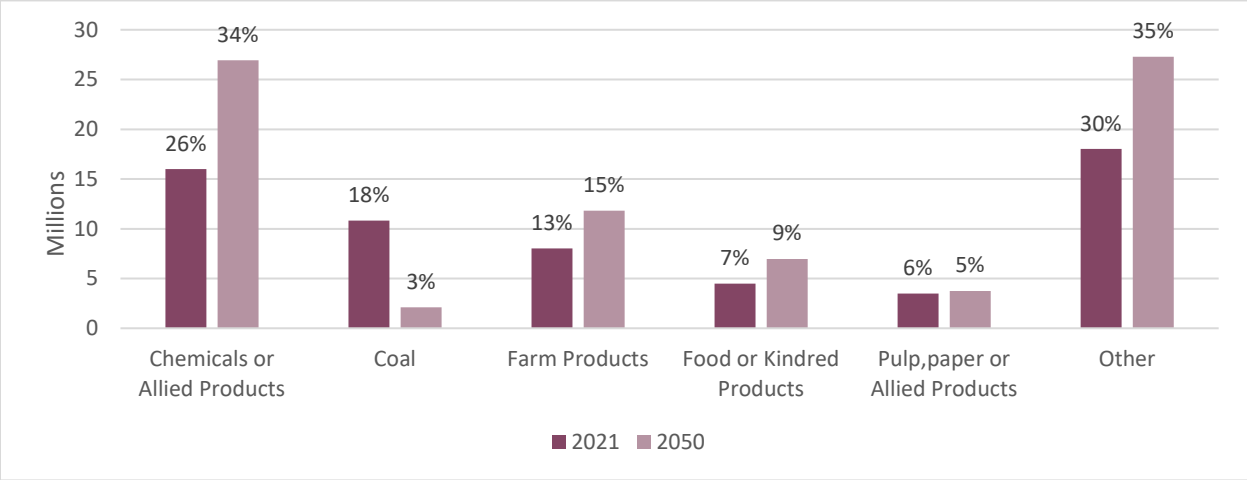


Source: STB Carload Waybill Sample data, 2021, S&P Forecast.

In contrast to traffic associated with Louisiana, **through traffic** is anticipated to maintain a greater diversity of commodities through 2050. Nevertheless, *Chemicals or Allied Products*, which held the top position in 2021 on the basis of tonnage, are expected to account for a significantly increased share of 34% by 2050. The largest change is projected for coal, which will see its share plummet from 18% to 3%. *Farm Products*, *Food or Kindred Products*, and *Pulp, Paper or Allied Products* all maintain their relative positions among the top five.

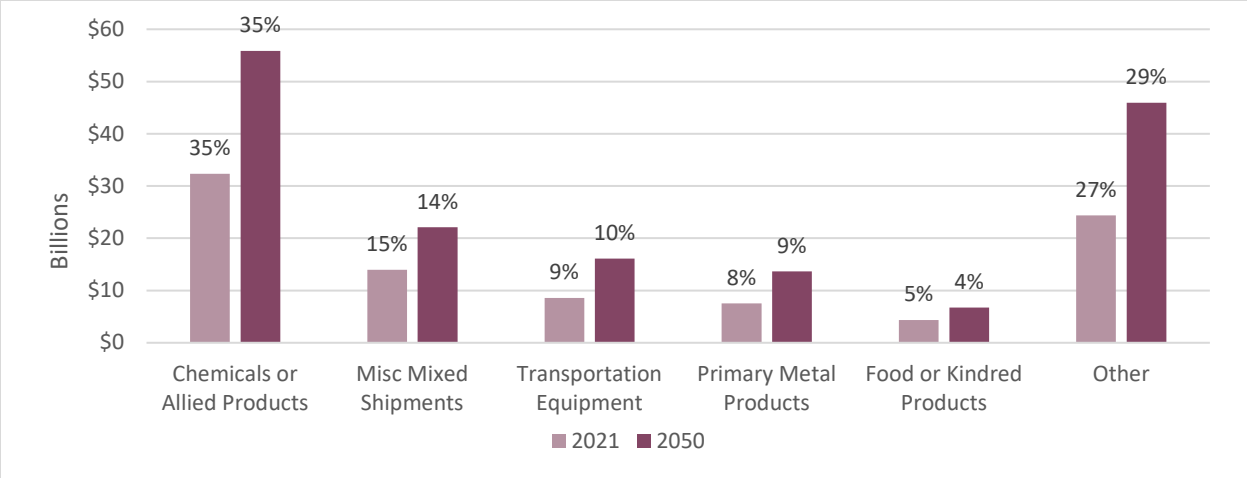
In terms of value, *Mixed Shipments* (intermodal) claim the second spot. *Transportation Equipment*, *Primary Metal Products* and *Food or Kindred Products* round out the top five commoditieswithout any anticipated changes in ranking through 2050.

Figure 30: Louisiana Top Commodities by Tonnage, Through Traffic, 2021 Actual and 2050 Forecast



Source: STB Carload Waybill Sample data, 2021, S&P Forecast.

Figure 31: Louisiana Top Commodities by Value, Through Traffic, 2021 Actual and 2050 Forecast



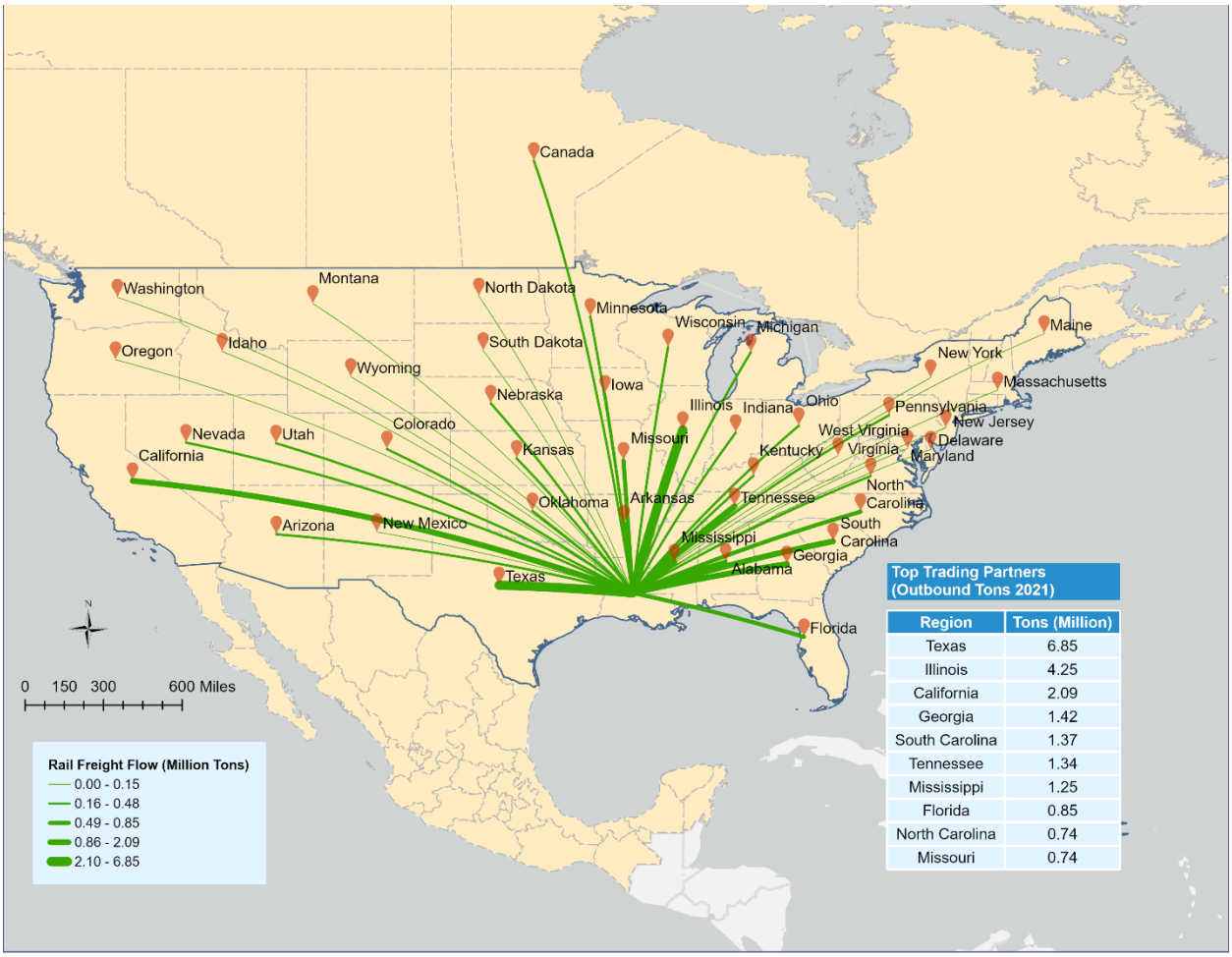
Source: STB Carload Waybill Sample data, 2021, S&P Forecast.

2.9.4 Top Trading Partners

Figure 32 through **Figure 39** provide a visual representation of inbound and outbound rail freight trade between Louisiana and various states and provinces within the United States, Canada, and Mexico. These maps assist in identifying the top trading partners, considering both the tonnage and value (US$) of freight for the years 2021 and the projected year 2050.

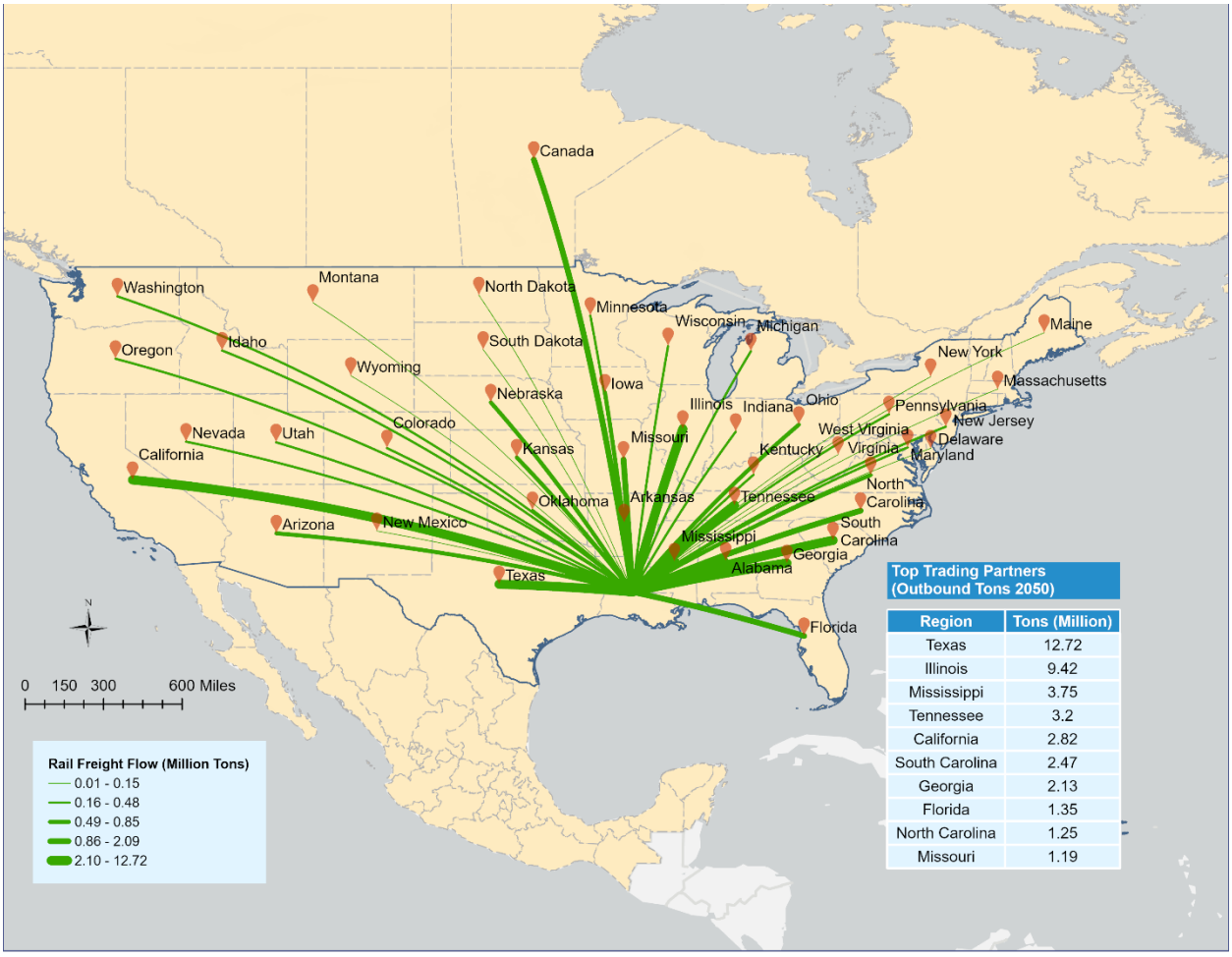
Texas, Illinois, and California consistently maintain their positions as the top trading partners for both outbound and inbound rail freight flows in 2021 and the projected year 2050 in terms of both tonnage and value of freight. Additional noteworthy trading partners include Tennessee, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, and Arkansas. Outside the U.S., Canada stands out as the only one to appear among the top 10 trading partners in terms of inbound freight flow by tonnage and value in 2021 and 2050. Trade with Mexico primarily consists of inbound freight flow from three Mexican states: Mexico, Puebla, and Veracruz.

Figure 32: Outbound Rail Freight Tonnage, 2021



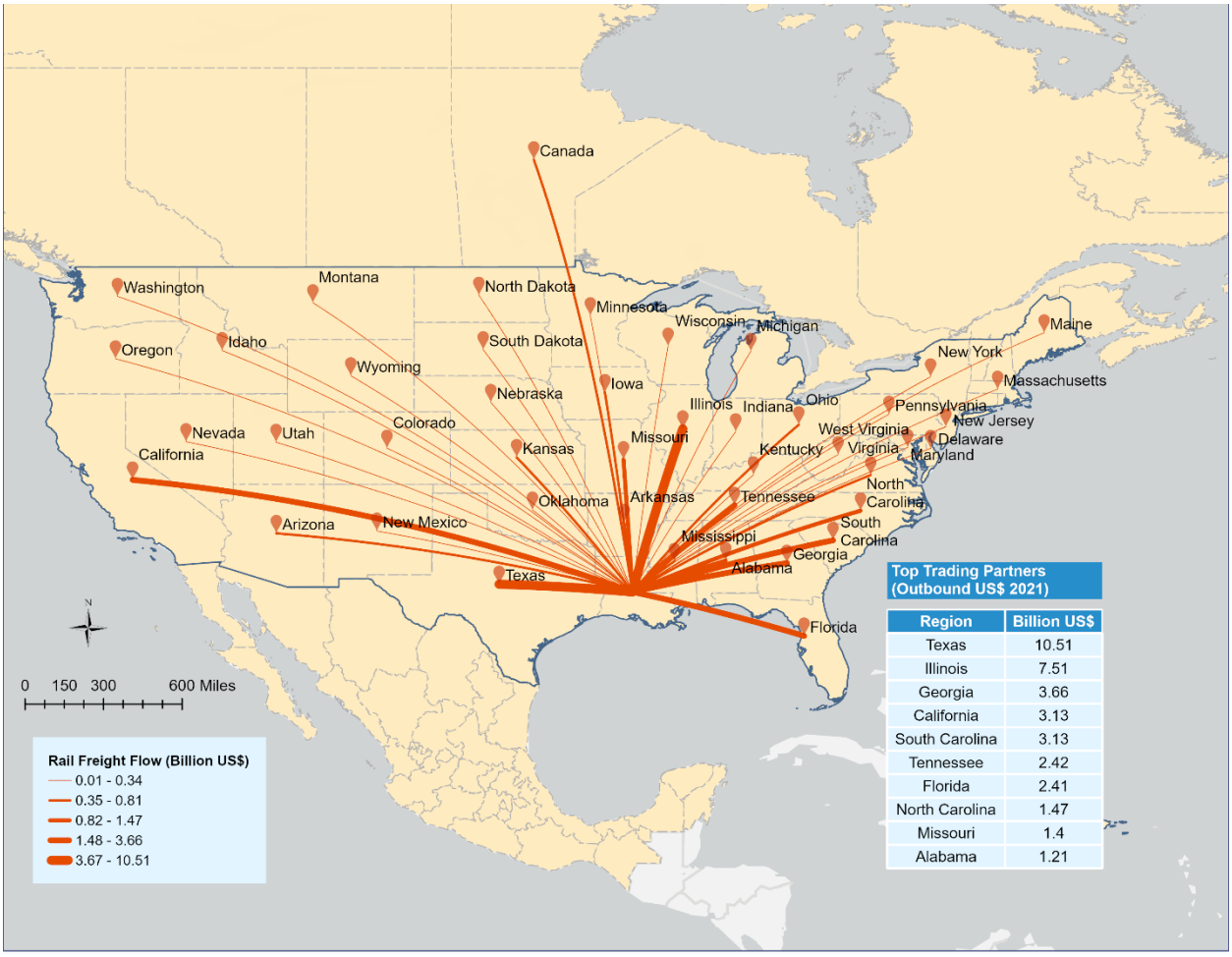
Source: STB Carload Waybill Sample data, 2021.

Figure 33: Projected Outbound Rail Freight Tonnage, 2050



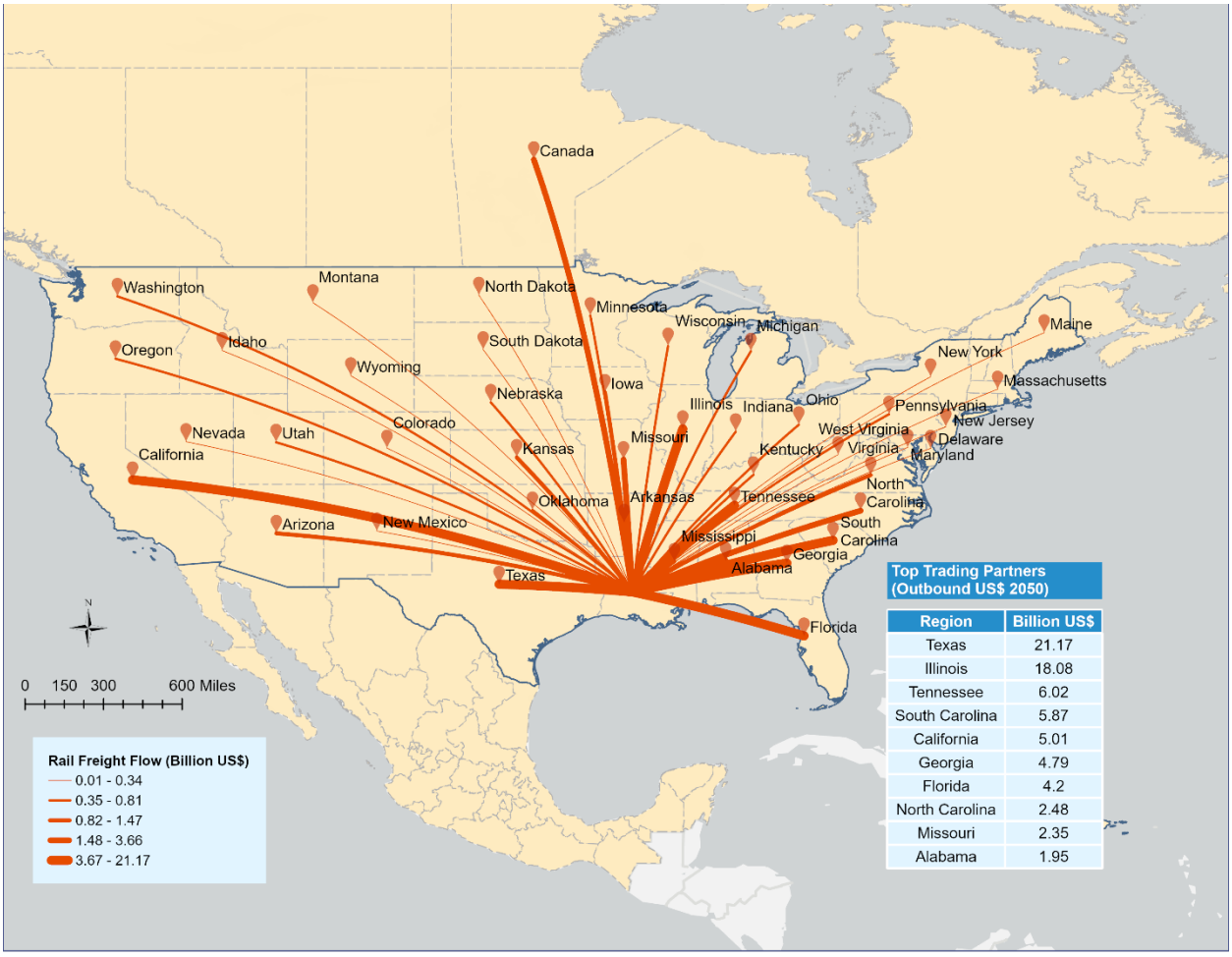
Source: STB Carload Waybill Sample data, 2021, S&P Forecast.

Figure 34: Outbound Rail Freight Value, 2021



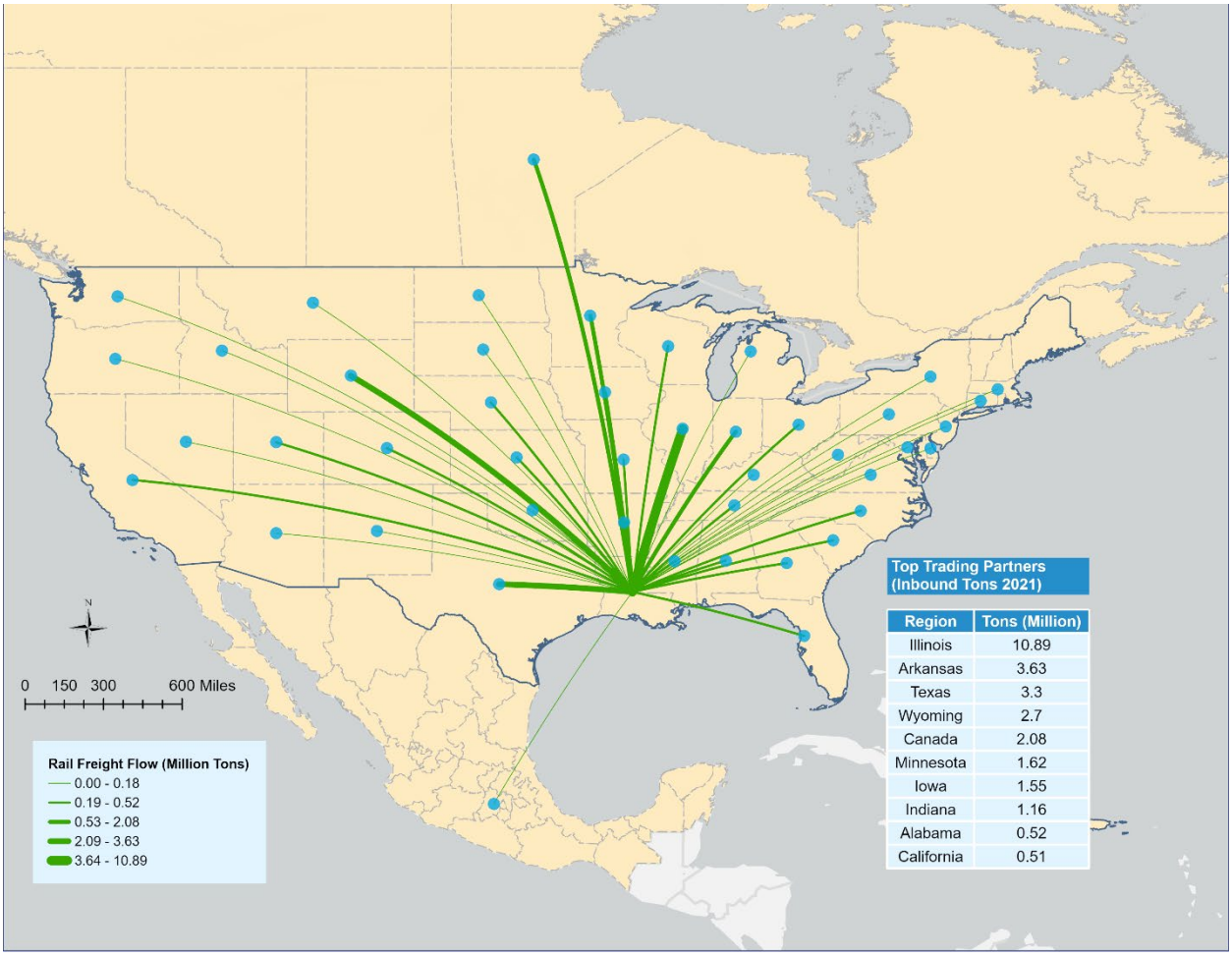
Source: STB Carload Waybill Sample data, 2021.

Figure 35: Projected Outbound Rail Freight Value, 2050



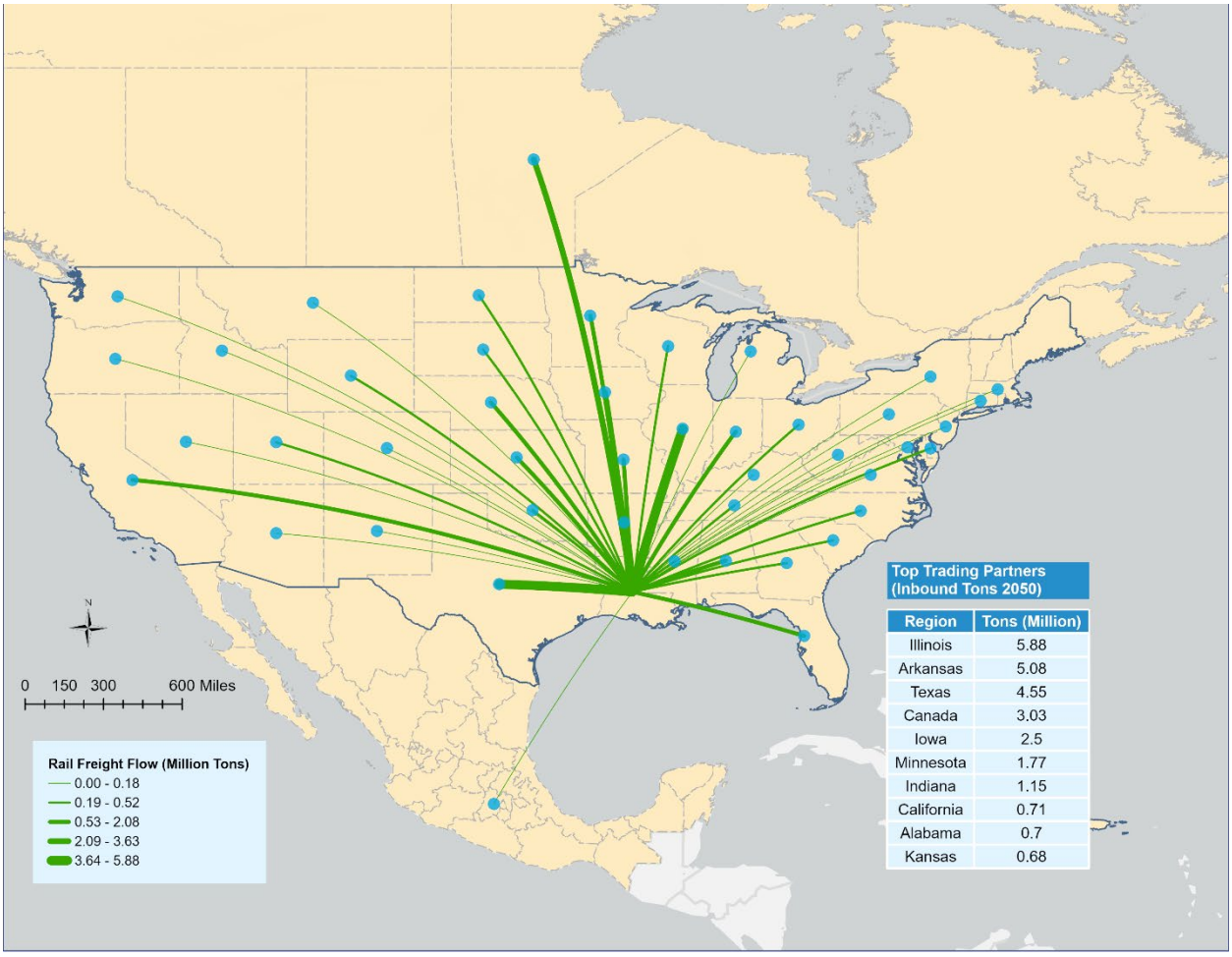
Source: STB Carload Waybill Sample data, 2021, S&P Forecast.

Figure 36: Inbound Rail Freight Tonnage, 2021



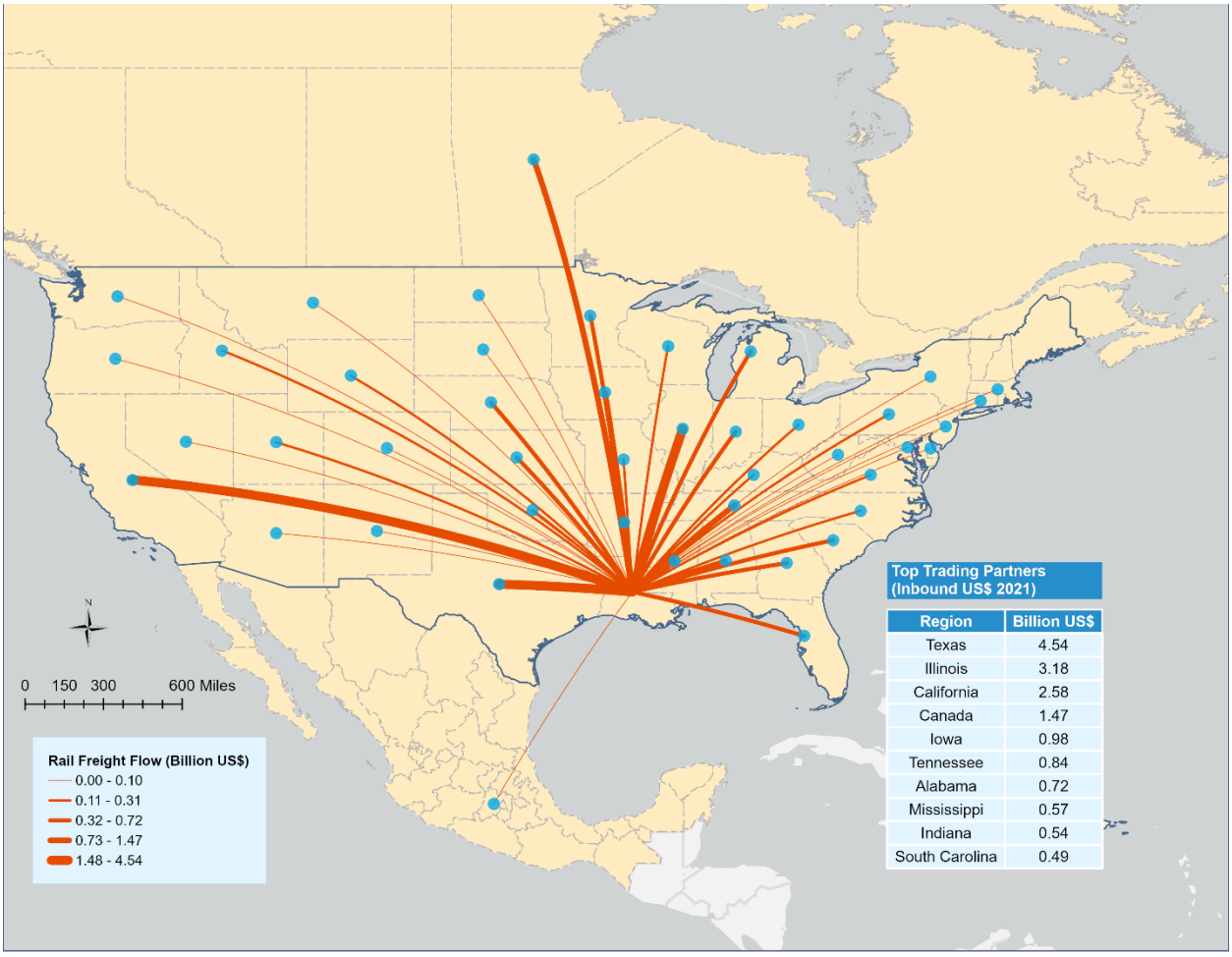
Source: STB Carload Waybill Sample data, 2021.

Figure 37: Projected Inbound Rail Freight Tonnage, 2050



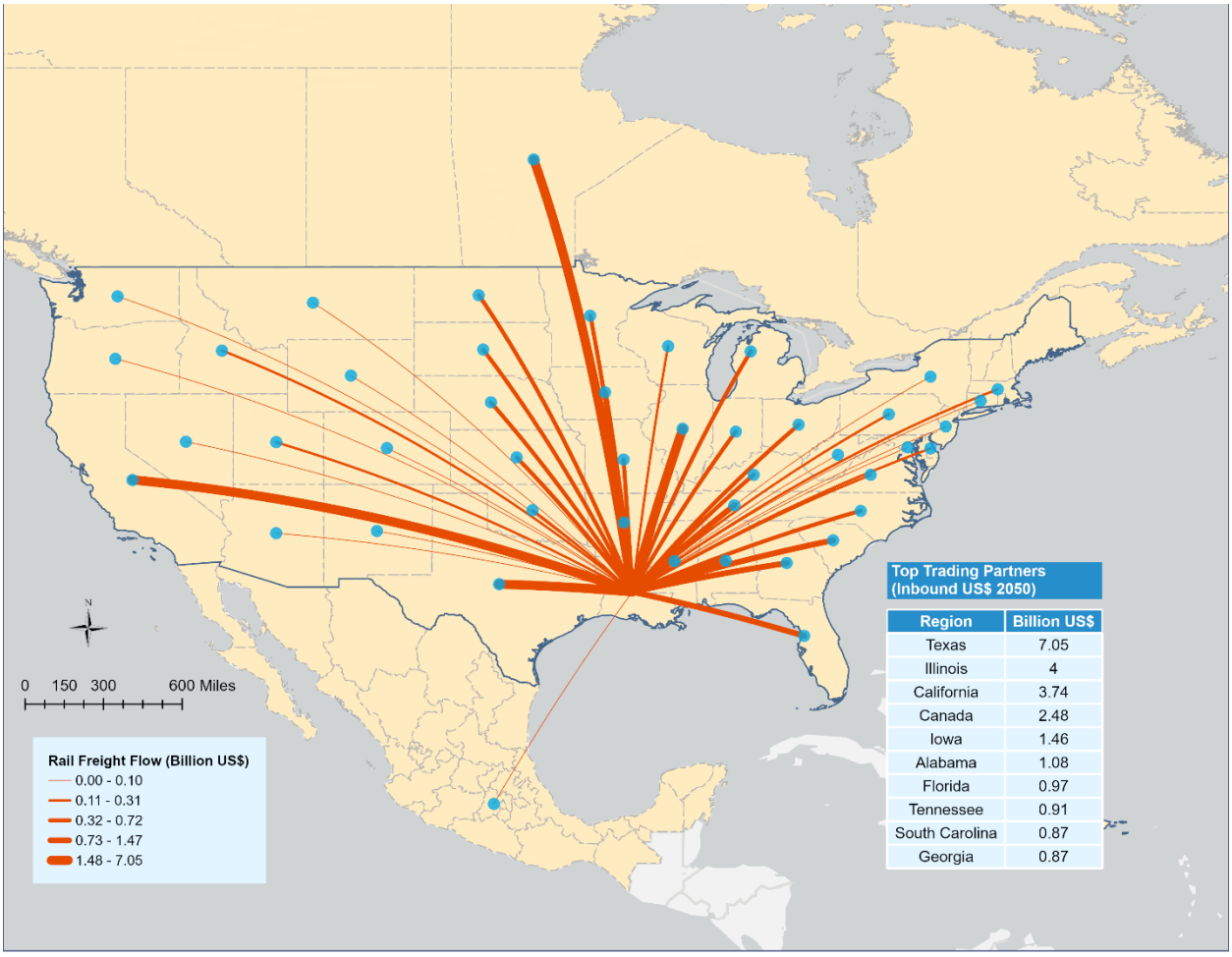
Source: STB Carload Waybill Sample data, 2021, S&P Forecast.

Figure 38: Inbound Rail Freight Value, 2021



Source: STB Carload Waybill Sample data, 2021.

Figure 39: Projected Inbound Rail Freight Value, 2050

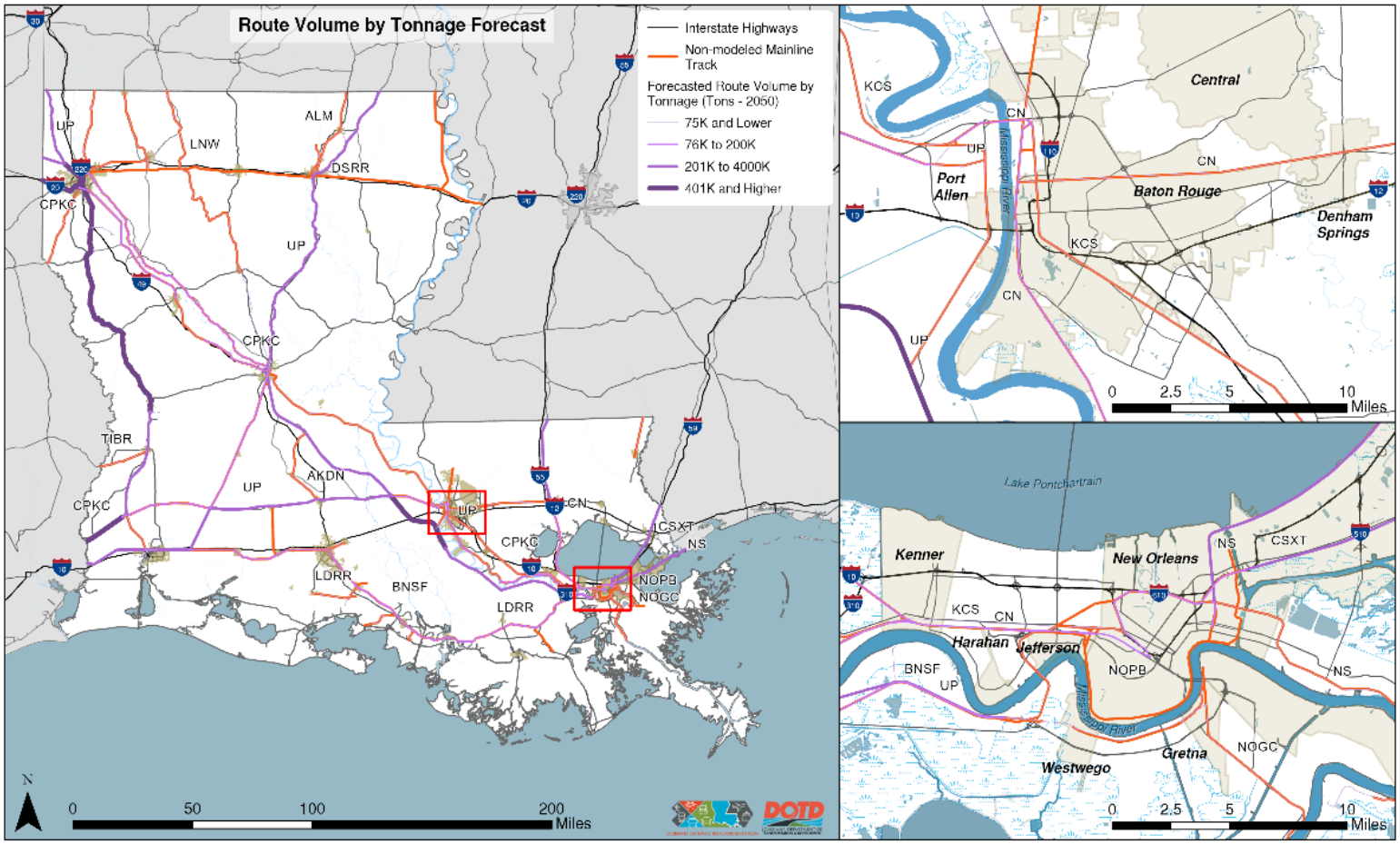


Source: STB Carload Waybill Sample data, 2021, S&P Forecast.

2.9.5 Route Volumes

The routing of rail freight through Louisiana is also expected to change from the 2021 baseline. CPKC's Beaumont subdivision is expected to emerge as a major rail freight corridor in the coming decades from the perspective of gross tonnage and total rail traffic. Rail car traffic is also anticipated to grow substantially on UP's Livonia, Alexandria, Monroe, and McGehee subdivisions (New Orleans – Alexandria – Monroe – Arkansas state line). Forecasted route volume by tonnage and car traffic is shown in **Figure 40** and **Figure 41**.

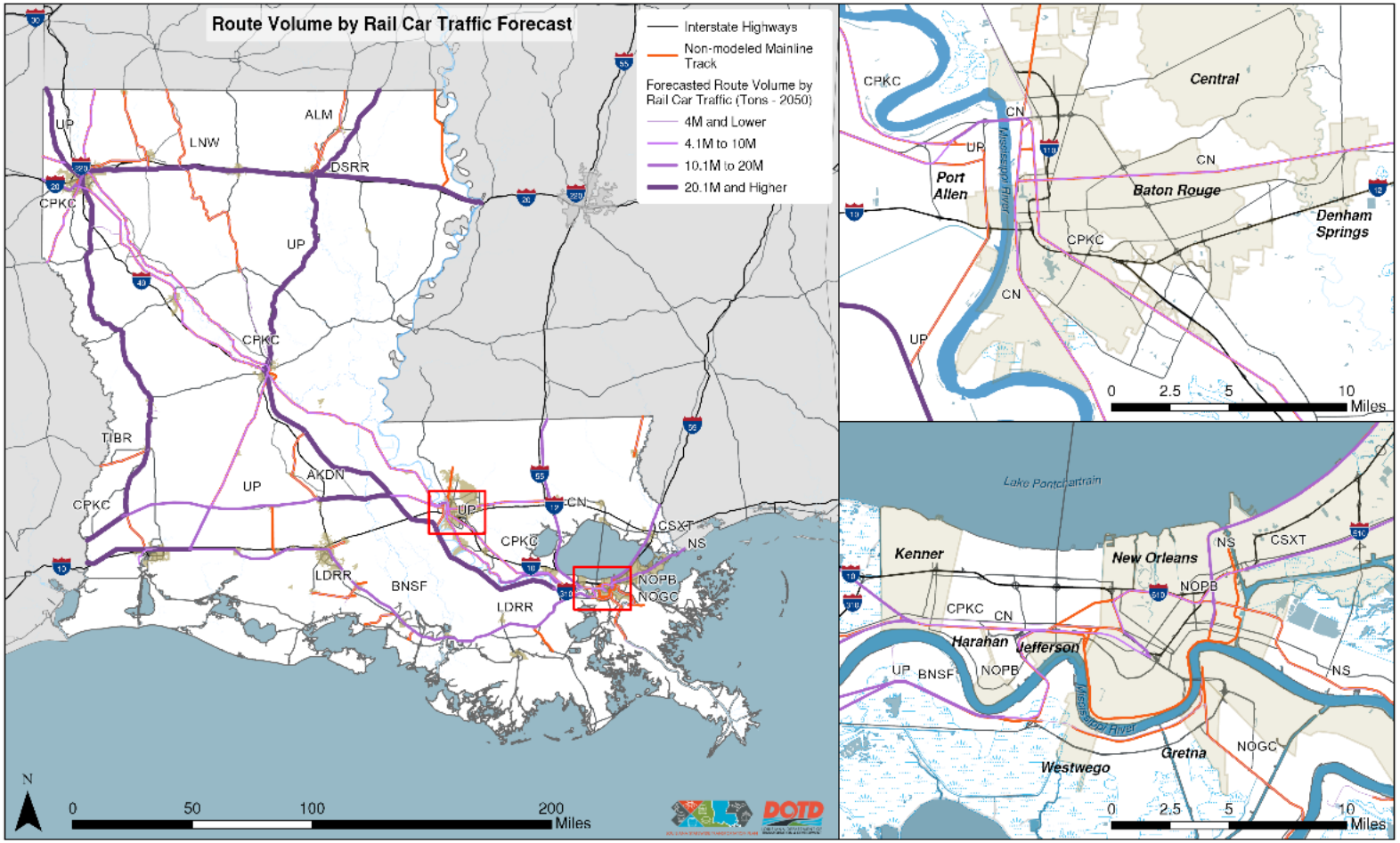
Figure 40: Route Volume by Tonnage, 2050



Source: Federal Railroad Administration, USDOT BTS, STB Carload Waybill Sample data, S&P Forecast.

Note: Due to limitations of the modeling process used to determine level of service and the nature of operations along certain rail segments, not all operating mainline track is presented in this figure. Consult the map legend for non-modeled mainline track.

Figure 41: Route Volume by Rail Car Traffic, 2050



Source: Federal Railroad Administration, USDOT BTS, STB Carload Waybill Sample data, S&P Forecast.

Note: Due to limitations of the modeling process used to determine level of service and the nature of operations along certain rail segments, not all operating mainline track is presented in this figure. Consult the map legend for non-modeled mainline track.

2.10 Future Passenger Rail Demand

Louisiana hosts three long-distance intercity passenger rail routes operated by Amtrak. All three routes – the *City of New Orleans*, the *Crescent*, and the *Sunset Limited* – service New Orleans Union Passenger Terminal (NOUPT). Seven Louisiana communities: Hammond, Lafayette, Lake Charles, New Iberia, New Orleans, Schriever, and Slidell, are stops along these three routes. This section presents future-year ridership projections.

2.10.1 Forecasted Passenger Demand

Ridership in Louisiana has yet to recover to pre-pandemic levels. Apart from the immediate impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, ridership has been constrained through poor on-time performance, rolling stock shortages, and service outages that have all increased since the early 2010s. Following the COVID-19 pandemic, the availability of rolling stock has further tightened due to insufficient capacity to perform required maintenance and overhauls. As a result, the three long-distance trains serving Louisiana operate with reduced consistency compared to their service levels prior to the pandemic.

In order to estimate ridership projections for Louisiana, previous ridership projections, historical ridership trends, and current state population and employment projections were reviewed. Additionally, the latest neighboring states' passenger rail ridership projections were also reviewed. **Table 56** provides a summary of the passenger rail ridership compound annual growth rates (CAGR) from different neighboring state rail plans. The annual growth rates for the passenger rail ridership of neighboring states range between 0.8% and 2%. The 2020 Louisiana State Rail Plan used a 2.1% CAGR to estimate 2018 to 2038 ridership projections.

Table 56: Historical and Projected Ridership Growth from Neighboring State Rail Plans

Source	Forecast Years	Ridership CAGR
Mississippi State Rail Plan Update, 2022[33]	2019 to 2045	1.5%
Missouri State Freight & Rail Plan, 2022[34]	2019 to 2026	0.8%
Arkansas State Rail Plan Draft, 2023	2022 to 2027	2.0%

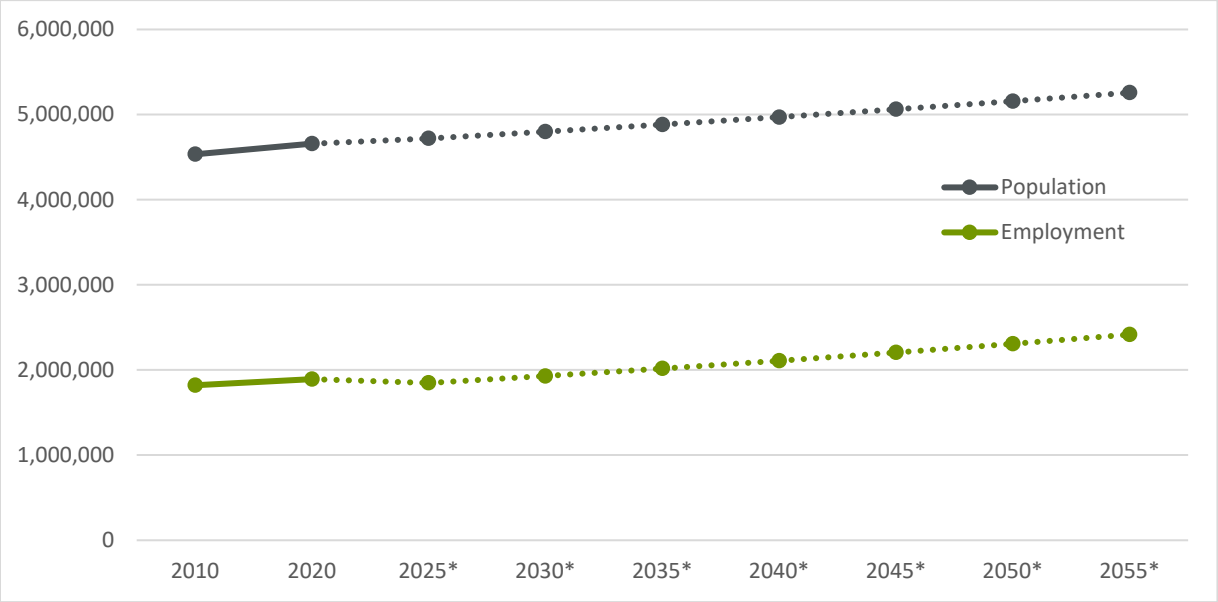
Source: Cambridge Systematics review of various state rail plans, 2023

The health of the economy influences freight and passenger demand. Growth in population and employment activity means growth in freight and passenger transportation demand. According to the Regional Economics Model (REMI), the total population of Louisiana is expected to increase modestly, i.e., 0.42% CAGR, from 4.66 million people in 2021 to 5.26 million by 2055. According to the same macroeconomic forecast, the total employment during the same time

[33] *Mississippi State Rail Plan Update, 2022*
[34] *https://www.modot.org/sites/default/files/documents/2022%20MoDOT%20Rail%20Plan%20Report_1.pdf*

period will increase by a CAGR of 1.05%. **Figure 42** shows the historic state population and employment and their projections through 2055.

Figure 42: Population and Employment Growth and Projection

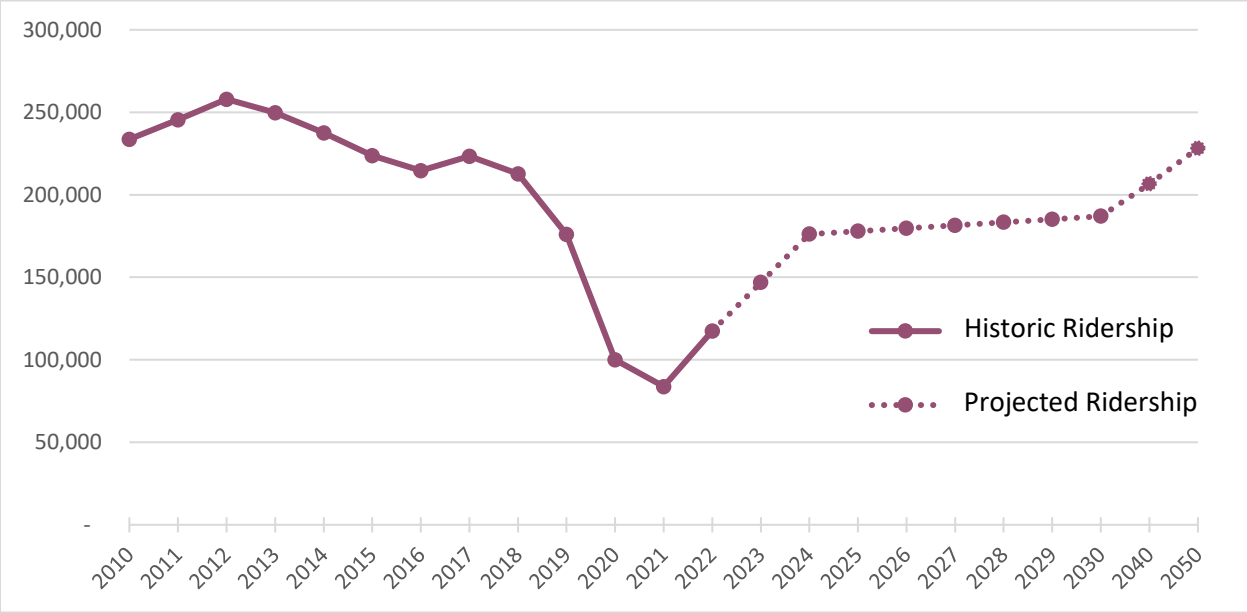


Source: Decennial Census, BLS, Woods & Poole Economics, and REMI - Regional Economics Model, Inc..

Existing Amtrak Service Ridership Projections

The ridership forecast for existing Louisiana Amtrak stations assumes that ridership will reach pre-pandemic levels, i.e., 2019 ridership, by the year 2024, and then assumes a 1.0% CAGR through 2050. **Figure 43** shows the historic and projected ridership for the state, and **Table 57** shows a breakdown of the projected numbers by stations.

Figure 43: Historic and Projected Ridership 2010-2050



Source: Amtrak ridership 2010-2022, forecast developed by Cambridge Systematics 2023-2050.

Table 57: Ridership Projection by Station, 2023-2050

	Base year	Projected					
Station	2022	2023	2024	2025	2030	2040	2050
Hammond	6,023	6,464	6,904	6,973	7,329	8,095	8,942
Lafayette	3,871	4,825	5,778	5,836	6,133	6,775	7,484
Lake Charles	2,550	3,310	4,070	4,111	4,320	4,772	5,272
New Iberia	1,178	1,391	1,604	1,620	1,703	1,881	2,078
New Orleans	99,672	125,825	151,977	153,497	161,327	178,205	196,849
Schriever	933	1,029	1,124	1,135	1,193	1,318	1,456
Slidell	3,219	3,961	4,702	4,749	4,991	5,513	6,090
Total	**117,446**	**146,803**	**176,159**	**177,921**	**186,996**	**206,560**	**228,171**

Source: Amtrak ridership 2010-2022, and forecast developed by Cambridge Systematics 2023-2050.

2.10.2 New Passenger Service Scenarios

Reinstate New Orleans-Mobile Service

In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina in 2005, the Gulf Coast's critical rail infrastructure was destroyed, suspending passenger rail services throughout the region. An ongoing project advanced by the SRC will re-establish passenger rail service between New Orleans and Mobile, Alabama with scheduled stops at Bay St. Louis, Gulfport, Biloxi, and Pascagoula, Mississippi. Following an FY 2022 Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) federal grant, this initiative is now fully funded, and twice-daily round trips are expected to launch in

2024. Additional service including extension east towards Florida remains under consideration. An Amtrak report from 2015 estimated that two daily round-trips between New Orleans and Mobile would generate annual ridership of 307,800 passengers, and a daily round-trip between New Orleans and Orlando would generate annual ridership of 138,300 passengers.[35]

New Baton Rouge – New Orleans Service

Service is envisioned for twice-daily round trips with stops in Baton Rouge (downtown and/or Health District), Gonzales, LaPlace, Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport, and the NOUPT in downtown New Orleans. Since the discontinuation of service along this corridor in 1969, many local, regional, and state entities have sought to reinstate rail travel between Louisiana's most populated metropolitan areas, Baton Rouge and New Orleans. Achievement of this goal became more feasible in 2021, the result of a commitment by Canadian Pacific Railway (CP) as part of its acquisition of Kansas City Southern (KCS) to accommodate passenger service on the route, along with increased availability of federal funding for starting up new passenger rail service. In 2022, a $20 million federal grant was secured for right-of-way acquisition, design, and construction of the Baton Rouge and Gonzales train stations and supporting infrastructure through the U.S. DOT Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) program. According to the Baton Rouge–New Orleans Intercity Passenger Rail Feasibility Study (2023), by FY 2027, projected annual total ridership on this route will be 89,000 with two-daily round trips, and 138,000 with four-daily round trips.[36]

New Shreveport/I-20 Corridor Service (Long Distance Train)

Passenger rail along the I-20 corridor is currently in the planning phase. The service would be an extension of Amtrak's Crescent which currently terminates in New Orleans. This extension would connect major metropolitan areas including New York, Atlanta, and Dallas/Fort Worth and expand access to passenger rail to communities without a current connection including Monroe and Shreveport. Amtrak, in partnership with the SRC, submitted the I-20 corridor to the FRA's Federal State partnership Program in 2023.

The Rail Passengers Association recently conducted an Economic Impact Assessment on Amtrak's proposal to extend service on the Crescent route from Meridian, Mississippi, to Fort Worth, Texas. The study projected that annual ridership on the potential service could exceed 275,000. Among them, estimated annual ridership for three stations in Lousiana is 56,035. The three stations are – Monroe (18,258 riders), Ruston (13,964 riders), and Shreveport (23,813).[37]

Table 58 summarizes the ridership numbers for the above discussed new service scenarios.

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[35]Amtrak, *Report for the Southern Rail Commission on Potential Gulf Coast Service Restoration Options* (December 2015)

[36] Draft Baton Rouge–New Orleans Intercity Passenger Rail Feasibility Study 2023

[37]Rail Passengers Association, *Extending the Crescent Daily Between Meridian and Fort Worth: An Economic Benefits Assessment* (March 2023)

Table 58: Ridership Estimates for New Passenger Services

New Service	Service Type	Estimated Annual Ridership
Gulf Coast Service	Two daily round-trip between New Orleans and Mobile	307,800
	One daily round-trip between New Orleans and Orlando	138,300
Baton Rouge – New Orleans Service	Two-daily round trips	89,000
	Four-daily round trips	138,000
Shreveport/I-20 Corridor Service	Estimated annual ridership for Monroe, Ruston, and Shreveport stations	56,035

Source: Amtrak, Report for the Southern Rail Commission on Potential Gulf Coast Service Restoration Options (December 2015). Draft Baton Rouge–New Orleans Intercity Passenger Rail Feasibility Study 2023. Rail Passengers Association, Extending the Crescent Daily Between Meridian and Fort Worth: An Economic Benefits Assessment (March 2023).

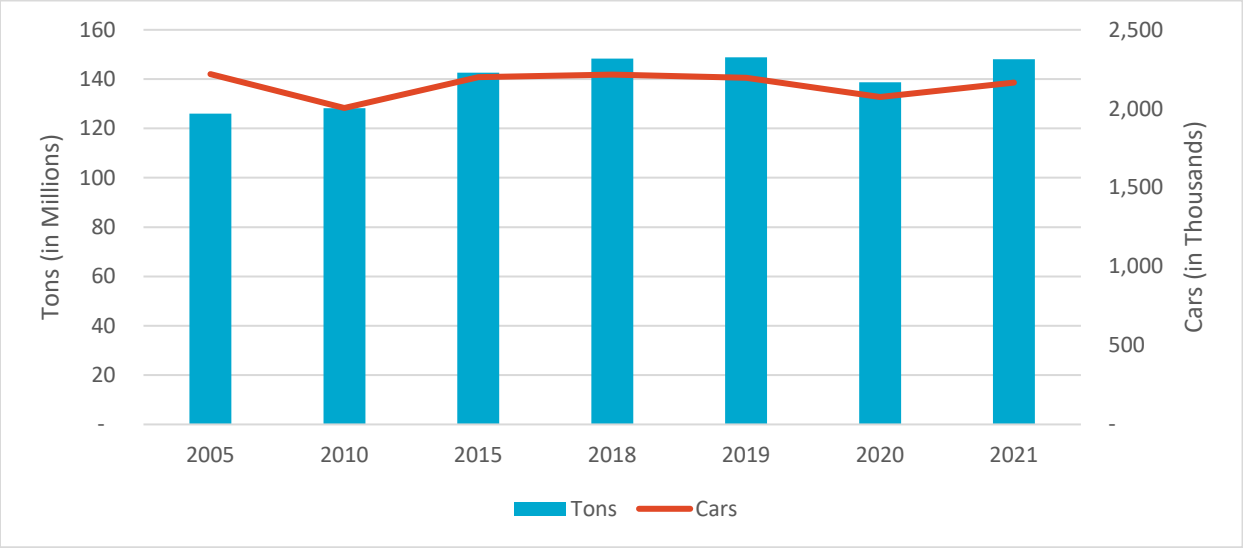
2.11 Trend Tracking

DOTD tracks other trends that have a bearing on freight and passenger rail. These range from physical and operational constraints of rail system connections to other travel modes. It is also necessary to look to the future to identify concerns or major changes before they affect the efficiency of freight and passenger service.

2.11.1 Rail Cars and Tonnage

As shown in **Figure 44**, rail tonnage in Louisiana has increased 17% since 2005 while railcar units have decreased 2%. The decline in railcar units has been mostly driven by a 30% decline in intermodal units (trailers or containers in flat cars).

Figure 44: Louisiana Rail Freight Trends, 2005, 2010, 2015, 2018-2021



Source: STB Carload Waybill Sample data

2.11.2 Fuel Costs

The impact of fuel costs to freight and passenger rail is twofold. Not only do railroads rely on diesel fuel to run their locomotives, but high fuel costs can drive motorists to choose rail for more of their trips. Anticipated increases in diesel fuel costs over the coming decades is expected to shift demand for freight shipping from trucks to rail due to the relative fuel efficiency of rail travel. The same can be said for air cargo and the cost-prohibitive nature of jet fuel. In fact, total air cargo volumes in the U.S. declined in the two decades before the COVID-19 pandemic due to industry changes including increased fuel costs.

2.11.3 Rail Congestion

Congested rail segments are those where the infrastructure is unable to accommodate the amount of traffic without impacting service. Congestion on the rail network creates issues for shippers including lengthened or unreliable travel times. This section defines the major issues that threaten the dependability of freight rail. In addition to the volume analysis described in **Section 2.3.6**, an extensive level-of-service (LOS) analysis was undertaken to inform DOTD in its decision-making by identifying corridors where capacity issues are occuring and where they are likely to occur in the future if corrective action is not taken.

2.11.3.1 Level of Service

Level of service (LOS) is derived using the methodology established in the Association of American Railroads' (AAR) National Rail Freight Infrastructure Capacity and Investment Study. Existing condition data, including track capacity and rail traffic, is analyzed to determine

congestion on freight rail corridors which takes the form of a volume-to-capacity (V/C) ratio. V/C ratio ranges and their associated LOS grades are shown in **Table 59**. **Figure 45** and **Figure 46** show 2021 LOS and 2050 forecasted LOS.

Table 59: Volume/Capacity and Level of Service Grading

LOS Grade	Capacity Level	V/C Ratio	Description
A	Below Capacity	0.0 to 0.2	Low to moderate train flows with capacity to accommodate maintenance and recover from incident
B		0.2 to 0.4	
C		0.4 to 0.7	
D	Near Capacity	0.7 to 0.8	Heavy train flow with moderate capacity to accommodate maintenance and recover from incidents
E	At Capacity	0.8 to 1.0	Very heavy train flow with very limited capacity to accommodate maintenance and recover from incidents
F	Above Capacity	≥1.0	Unstable flows; service breakdown conditions

Source: Association of American Railroads

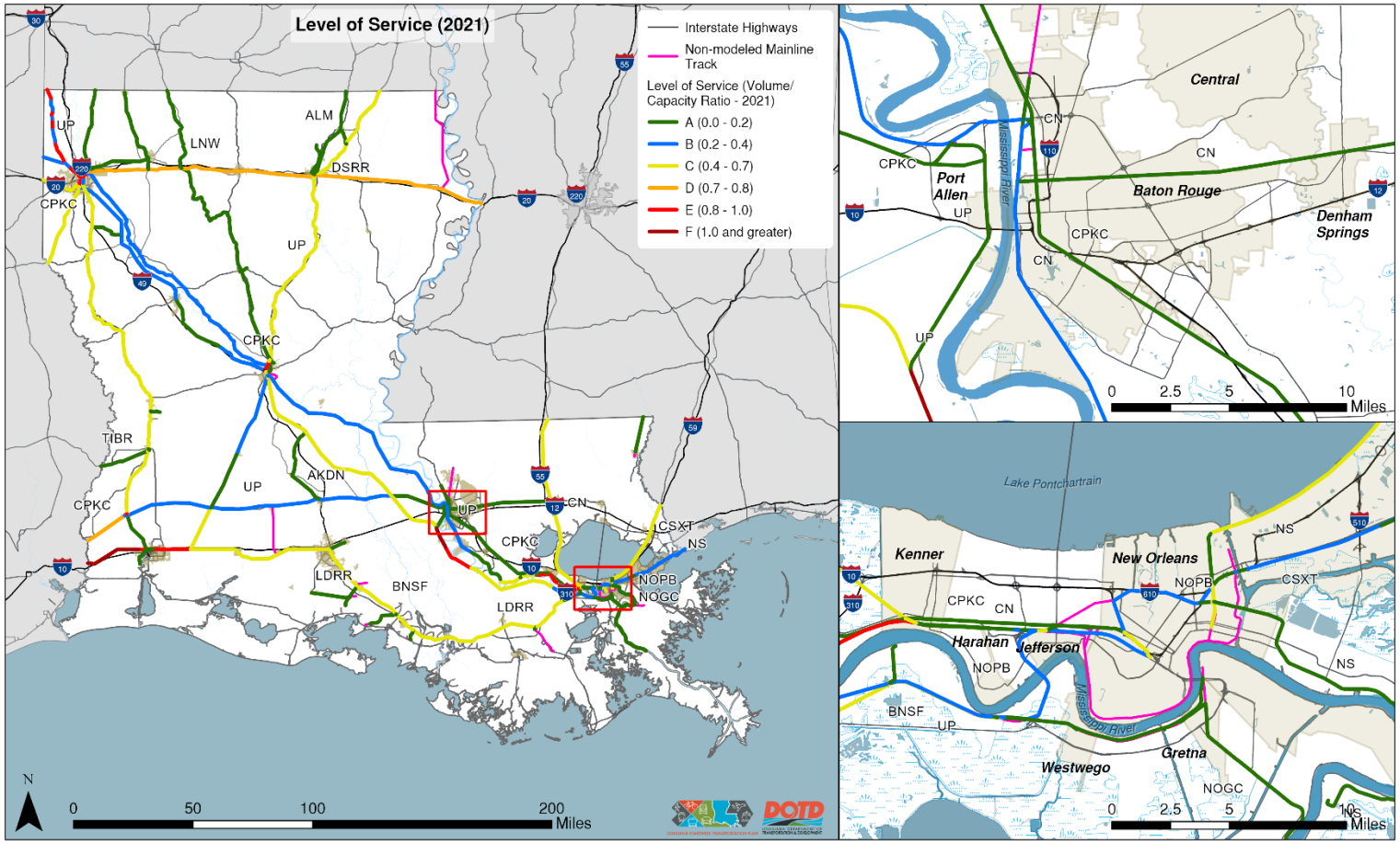
Insufficient Siding Length

As technology is implemented to ensure the safe operation of longer trains, railroads are increasing the number of cars included in a train as safety and operations technology advances. Previously, the industry standard for siding track length was 8,000 feet. Railroads are moving to 10,000 -15,000 foot siding tracks to accommodate long trains. Lengthening of siding tracks, particularly on high-traffic corridors, is necessary for rail to continue as a viable freight option for Louisiana industries and shippers.

New Orleans Rail Gateway

New Orleans is the fourth-largest U.S. rail gateway, and supports the operations of six Class I railroads and three Amtrak intercity passenger routes. In addition to these national rail carriers, the New Orleans Public Belt Railroad operates rail lines and support facilities to accommodate the interchange of goods between Class I railroads. In addition to being a busy interchange point, aging infrastructure and modal conflicts impact freight rail operations. Factors detrimental to freight rail include a lack of grade separation, limited water crossings, and dense urban development of the area.

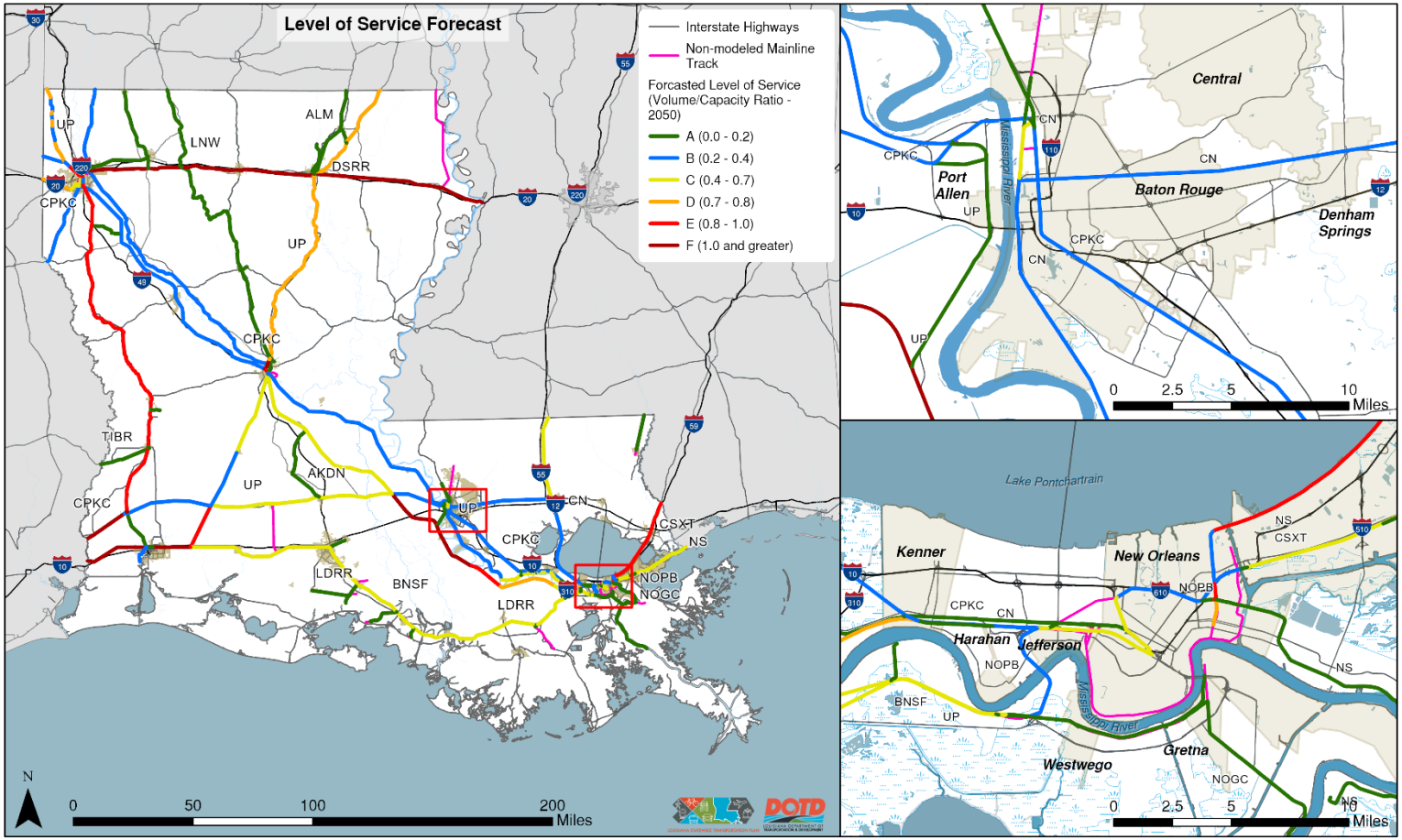
Figure 45: Level of Service, 2021



Source: Federal Railroad Administration, USDOT Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS).

Note: Due to limitations of the modeling process used to determine level of service, and the nature of operations along certain rail segment, not all operating mainline track is presented in this figure. Consult the map legend for non-modeled mainline track.

Figure 46: Level of Service Forecast, 2050



Source: Federal Railroad Administration, USDOT Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS).

Note: Due to limitations of the modeling process used to determine level of service, and the nature of operations along certain rail segment, not all operating mainline track is presented in this figure. Consult the map legend for non-modeled mainline track.

2.11.4 Congestion on Other Modes

Maintaining efficient operations across all transportation modes is vital to the success of Louisiana's statewide rail network. A well-maintained and efficient multimodal system of water, rail, air, and over-the-road freight transportation requires the needs of all modes to be met. Congestion on other modes can translate into inefficiencies in the interchange of freight and, in some instances, direct conflict between modes.

2.11.4.1 Highway Congestion

Much like the congested rail segments identified by the LOS analysis in **Section 2.11.3**, congested highway segments experiencing delays undermine the efficiency and reliability of freight shipping in the state. The FHWA's Freight Mobility Trends Analysis Tool analyzes the worst bottlenecks in various geographies across the United States. Of the top 10 bottlenecks by delay per mile from that tool, nine of Louisiana's top ten worst bottlenecks are along Interstate 10 (I-10) between New Orleans and Baton Rouge, with the remaining bottleneck located on Interstate 12 (I-12) in Baton Rouge. These truck bottlenecks correspond with numerous rail lines operating at varied levels of service that could be used to alleviate highway congestion.

There are over 2,700 at-grade rail crossings in Louisiana. Significant safety issues arise where railroads meet public roadways as is covered extensively in **Section 2.6**. At-grade crossings also threaten the efficency of both transportation modes. This is primarily the case where railroad traffic delays other travel modes which is exacerbated by increasingly longer trains blocking roadways for longer durations at a time.

2.11.4.2 Airport Congestion

Capacity in aviation is related to two vital areas – the ability for airports to accommodate the movement of passengers in their terminals and the safe and efficient movement of aircraft operations on the airfield. In 2022, airports in Louisiana moved 13.9 million passengers and supported more than 1.5 million aircraft operations, resulting in more than $7 billion in economic output for the state of Louisiana.

Airport congestion is a multifaceted issue influenced by various factors including air travel demand, limited airport capacity, infrastructure constraints, severe weather events, and regulatory policies. Limited airport capacity is a critical factor contributing to congestion. Currently, none of the 68 public use airports (7 commercial service and 61 general aviation airports) in Louisiana are operating at or near their maximum airfield capacity during peak hours, which leads to delays, increased taxi times, and overall inefficiencies. Airports continue to modernize and upgrade their passenger terminals to alleviate congestion and improve the passenger experience as demand warrants.

Although a detailed airfield or terminal capacity analysis was not part of the Louisiana Aviation System Plan (LASP), based on projections of demand developed as part of the LASP, it is not anticipated that any significant congestion will occur on Louisiana airfields or terminals through 2055. Managing airport congestion requires proactive planning, investment and innovation to accommodate growing air travel demand while maintaining efficiency and sustainability. The LASP supports this effort by providing DOTD with data and metrics needed to support airport efforts to provide enough capacity to the wide variety of aviation users in the state.

2.11.4.3 Port Congestion

In 2018, 238.7 million tons of waterborne freight, valued at $59 billion, was transported on the Louisiana Inland Waterway system. This tonnage is the equivalent of six million 40-ton trucks, which represents significantly avoided congestion, emissions, and additional wear-and-tear on the Louisiana highway infrastructure. Waterborne freight in Louisiana, however, has its own unique issues when it comes to infrastructure needs and congestion. The DOTD Office of Multimodal Commerce will continue to track trends across all surface transportation to better understand when and where to make investments to port rail infrastructure across the state.

Rail carriers interchanging freight at Louisiana ports benefit from timely waterborne shipments and suffer lower productivity when issues arise. The viability of water transportation as a modal choice also relieves highway congestion by shifting freight that may have previously been shipped by truck to the water.

A survey conducted for the creation of the Louisiana Waterways State Transportation Plan identified a general need for dredging and waterway maintenance at smaller ports along the coast and in Louisiana's interior. Many ports responded to the survey saying that the greatest weakness or threat to the port is channel depth and stabilizing their banks against erosion. The Waterways Plan is intended to build a data-driven understanding of the needs of waterborne transportation in the state so DOTD and its partners can address deficiencies before they degrade service or create congestion for this mode.

2.11.5 Land Use Trends

Of Louisiana's 64 parishes, 24 are designated as urban by the Federal Office of Management and Budget (OMB). Urban-designated parishes are those associated with the state's major population centers of Alexandria, Baton Rouge, Laffayette, Lake Charles, Monroe, New Orleans, and Shreveport. For example, the Shreveport urbanized area covers Caddo, Bossier, and Webster parishes, making these urban parishes according to the OMB classification system. In 2021, urban parishes were home to 3,569,236 of Louisiana's 4,657,305 residents, or 76.6% of the statewide population. The remaining 23.4% of state residents in 2021 were distributed across Louisiana's 40 rural parishes.

According to the travel demand model projections presented in **Figure 20**, Louisiana's population is expected to surpass 5.1 million by 2050. The distribution of people living in urban parishes is expected to from 76.6% to 78.2% over this time. Conversely, the proportion of Louisiana residents living in rural parishes is expected to decline to 21.8% of the population.

Continued population growth in urban parishes will strain the existing transportation network connecting Louisiana's major cities and surrounding suburban communities. Increased travel on major roadways, including I-10, I-20, and I-49, is anticipated in the coming decades to accommodate population growth and the increasingly urbanized development pattern in the state. Some highway corridors connecting major population centers are already strained, as is the case with I-10 between New Orleans and Baton Rouge, which is discussed further in **Section 2.11.4.1**. Increased traffic on Louisiana's existing surface transportation system is expected to result in increased demand for passenger rail services, including both the expansion of existing services and the introduction of passenger service to currently unserved communities. Similarly, freight shippers may look to rail as an efficient alternative to over the road shipping should highway demand outpace capacity.

Employment in Louisiana's urban parishes, however, is projected to grow at a slower rate than population. Most jobs (82.4%) were concentrated in Louisiana's 24 urban parishes in 2021. This is expected to increase to 82.9% by 2050. This means that of the 522,592 jobs projected to be added to the state by 2050, 84.7% will occur in urban parishes. Modest gains in employment compared to population can be explained by the industrial sectors that are expected to grow over the coming decades, and the location of these jobs across the state. As discussed in **Section 2.9**, rail shipment of chemicals, plastics, rubber, food and agricultural products are expected to grow. Such products are produced or extracted from the state's rural areas, further removed from population centers.

2.11.6 Future Considerations

Changes in technology and automation will continue to drive shifts in rail operations impacting markets served by various operators, service reliability, environmental issues, and the inventory of traditional rolling stock. Two compelling future impacts on freight rail performance include system electrification and automated operations.

Electrification

North America's transportation system is almost entirely reliant on the combustion of fossil fuels, with diesel engines being the dominant technology used for freight haulage by rail, highway, and water. Although emissions from diesel-powered engines have been reduced substantially in recent decades, they continue to be a major source of several criteria pollutants and greenhouse gases (GHG). A central challenge facing the rail industry is how to successfully transition their fleet to low- or no-GHG alternative sources of propulsion energy. This migration presents a critical opportunity to impact climate change, improve air quality, and potentially

realize other categories of public benefits. Trials have been launched with both battery-powered and hydrogen technologies on freight and passenger rail rolling stock in North America and overseas.

- In 2021, Wabtec, together with BNSF and the California Air Resources Board, trialed a 2.5 MW battery storage line-haul locomotive.[38] Since then, Wabtec has continued to develop the technology and has announced versions with higher capacity batteries that have been sold to North American and overseas railroads for evaluation purposes.[39]
- Also in 2021, CP, in collaboration with Ballard, a leading producer of hydrogen fuel cells, announced the development of a main line locomotive using this technology.[40]

Automated Train Operations

Trains without locomotive engineers are a proven technology. Subway and other fixed guideway passenger and freight transport systems have operated autonomously since the 1960s, and remote-control locomotives have been commonly used by railroads since the 1980s. More recently, train automation technology has been deployed on freight main lines. Rio Tinto Mining in Western Australia runs an increasing number of driverless trains on its 1,100-mile rail network. In the U.S., the railroads' investment in Positive Train Control (PTC) established a foundation for greater levels of automation that can reduce staffing levels on line-haul freight trains. The prospect of greater automation is of interest to rail labor due to potential elimination of jobs. The technology being developed for automating freight trains will also be applicable to passenger operations, with the prospect of some cost savings, but less than for freight. With these services generally having operating costs greater than fare revenue, there is an opportunity to reduce required operating subsidies and/or provide increased service levels.

[38] Railway Age, *BNSF/Wabtec BEL Pilot: The Results Are In* (May 17, 2021)
[39] GoErie, *World's First All Electric Freight Locomotive to be Used in Western PA* (November 11, 2021)
[40] Global Railway Review, *CP Purchases Fuel Cell Modules for its Hydrogen Locomotive Program* (March 12, 2021)

3.0 Rail Service Needs and Proposed Rail Improvements

Based on Chapter 2 findings and input from the stakeholder engagement summarized in Chapter 5, this chapter summarizes the key issues, service gaps, and improvement needs (including connectivity to other modes). It will also identify the opportunities to address those issues, gaps, needs, and deficits for freight and passenger rail.

3.1 Freight Rail Improvement Opportunities

Freight rail improvements were categorized as state of good repair (SOGR)/infrastructure upgrades, grade crossing safety projects, multimodal connectivity and terminal improvements, and rolling stock projects. SOGR/infrastructure upgrades include improvements to infrastructure to meet current and future market demands. Grade crossing safety projects improve safety at highway-rail grade crossings. Multimodal connectivity and terminal improvements expand connectivity to ports, new customers and markets, and improve operations at rail terminals. Rolling stock projects acquire new or rehabilitated locomotives and freight railcars.

Even though these improvements are discussed as freight rail improvement opportunities, it is important to highlight that many of these rail projects would also benefit passenger rail by improving the reliability, safety, and efficient operation of both passenger and freight trains.

3.1.1 SOGR/Infrastructure Upgrades

SOGR/infrastructure upgrades entail improvements to infrastructure to meet current and future market demands and maintain competitive rail service and market relevance. Freight infrastructure needs include addressing deferred maintenance, such as rehabilitating and upgrading bridges, and tie and rail replacements programs; removing vertical, horizontal, and weight restrictions; and improving railway line capacity. Upgrading track and structures to handle 286k-lb freight cars, double-stacked containers, and oversize loads is necessary for railroads to remain profitable and competitive. Capacity projects include double tracking, adding sidings, rehabilitating existing track, reconstructing segments, raising line speeds, and expanding capacity at interchanges.

In addition to enhancing system capacity and reliability, many of these improvements also help improve resiliency and mitigate potential disruptions due to flooding and other natural disasters. Rail infrastructure repair and upgrades ensure the continued function of the state's rail network for both freight and passenger rail service. **Table 60** lists the SOGR and infrastructure upgrades proposed by stakeholders during this SRP process and included in the Rail Service and Investment Program (RSIP) detailed in Chapter 4.

Table 60: Proposed SOGR/Infrastructure Upgrades

Project Name	Railroad(s)/ Stakeholder(s)	Project Description
Almonaster Avenue Bridge Rehabilitation	CSX, DOTD	This project has been ongoing since Katrina, and the final set of plans are now almost in place.
Ties, surface, and switch upgrade	BRS	Ties, surface, and switch upgrade (East Baton Rouge Parish)
Crossovers at St. Johns, Elysian Fields, and Terminal Junction	NS	Install crossovers at St. Johns, Elysian Fields, and Terminal Junction in Gulf Coast line
Upgrade and Improve Intersection	PRI, BNSF, CPKC	Upgrade and Improve Intersection (City of Lake Charles)
Loring Siding Extension Beaumont	CPKC	Siding extension at Loring (MP 625.9, Converse - Fisher Segment
Mansfield Siding Extension Beaumont	CPKC	Siding extension at Mansfield (MP 377), Frierson-Converse Segment
Monroe to Bastrop Track Surface and Alignment	ALM	Losing surface and alignment on the track. Stabilization required. 4 years before another tie cycle.
New Orleans Rail Gateway	BNSF, CN, CSX, CPKC, NS, UP	Freight Rail Investment for speedier interchanges for Class I railroads, with resulting operating cost savings. Closures of numerous grade crossings, resulting in enhanced safety and congestion mitigation, i.e., elimination of traffic delays at crossings. Provides congestion mitigation. Initial construction of the project. Cost estimated at 10% of project needs.
Bridges, rail, ties, and grade crossing upgrades	DSRR	Bridges, rail, ties, and grade crossing upgrades
Realign Mainline	NOPB	Realign the mainline by the NSA building at Poland Ave and the river. It currently takes the spur through a residential neighborhood which creates backups.
Construct two new sidings	DSRR	Construct two new sidings
Short Rail Infrastructure	DSRR, CPKC	Upgrades to a short-line rail system in Arkansas and Louisiana. Projects will benefit the Port of Lake Providence, Port of Madison and local economies by increasing capacity, efficiency and safety for goods shipped along the corridor
Singer Siding Extension Beaumont	CPKC	Siding extension at Singer (MP 705.1), Neame - Helme Segment
CN Mainline, Southport Jct to Kenner Jct. (Louis Armstrong International Airport Improvement)	CN, Amtrak	Improvement to CN Passenger Mainline. Amtrak's Sunset Limited, City of NOLA and proposed NOL-BTR service use this trackage.
Bayou Sale branch - New rail and ties upgrade	LDRR	Area with service to carbon black customers. Small rail needs to be upgraded to a bigger size. It's currently 90lbs but they need to get up to 115lbs. Their tie conditions are about a 2.5 on a scale of 1 to 5, 5 being the best. With smaller rail they have to travel at lower speeds for safety reason which disadvantages them and their customers. They are closing out their 7 year tie cycle.
Ties, surface, and switch upgrade	DUSR	Ties, surface, and switch upgrade
Ties and surface, rail	GOGR	Ties and surface, rail

Project Name	Railroad(s)/ Stakeholder(s)	Project Description
Restoration of abandoned rail line	GLSR	Restoration of abandoned rail line
Breaux Bridge - Upgrade ties, ballast, and grade crossings	LDRR	Breaux Bridge - Upgrade ties, ballast, and grade crossings
Ties, surface, ballast and rail upgrade	LDRR	Ties, surface, ballast and rail upgrade
Track raise to help with drainage & crossings being closed in the area	BNSF	Track Raise to help with drainage & crossings being closed in the area
Short Line Track Upgrades	AKDN, ALM, BRS, BBAY, DSRR, DUSR, GOGR, GLSR, LAS, LDRR, LNW, NLA, NOPB, TIBR	Upgrades of short line trackage to handle 286,000-pound maximum carload weights. Provides for more efficient operations and 286,000-pound carload capability. (Need for heavier rail).
New Orleans Rail Gateway	BNSF, CN, CSX, CPKC, NS, UP	Full construction of the project. Cost estimated 90% of project needs.
Upgrade Bridges, Rail, and ties	LAS	Upgrade Bridges, Rail, and ties
Bridge Upgrade	TIBR	Bridge Upgrade
Ties, surface, rail, switch, & bridge upgrade	TIBR	Ties, surface, rail, switch, & bridge upgrade
Short Line Track Upgrades	AKDN, ALM, BRS, BBAY, DSRR, DUSR, GOGR, GLSR, LAS, LDRR, LNW, NLA,NOPB, TIBR	Upgrades of short line trackage to handle 286,000-bound maximum carload weights. Cost estimated at 80% of statewide needs. Provides for more efficient operations and 286,000-pound carload capability.
Bridge rehabilitation/ upgrade	TIBR	Numerous bridges, expensive to replace/repair them, especially after damage from a storm or natural disaster.
Cypremort - Upgrade rail, ties, ballast and grade crossings	LDRR	14 miles of upgrade from 85lb. rail to 115lb. Rail.
Lockport - Upgrade bridge, rail, ties, ballast and grade crossings	LDRR	1 mile upgrade from 90lb. to 115lb. rail
Increased Capacity at Westwego	NOGC	Develop increased capacity at UP interchange at Westwego to support efficiency and facilitate current operations and facilitate growth.
Embedded Rail improvements	NOGC	Replace embedded rail running through Gretna street.
Addition of double main line in Westwego	NOGC	Tie ends of a sidings into the main line, enabling train passing to improve handling of Ag unit trains.
Rail Bridge Improvement	NS	Florida Avenue Rail Bridge
Bridge Rehabilitation	NS	Movable Seabrook Rail Bridge

3.1.2 Grade Crossing Safety

The principal intent of grade crossing safety investments is to reduce the risks associated with at-grade highway-rail crossings. Highway-rail grade crossings are a potential conflict point between highway traffic, pedestrians, bicyclists, and trains. A grade crossing crash has the potential to injure pedestrians, cyclists, highway-vehicle occupants, train crews, passengers aboard the train, and anyone in the vicinity. Fast moving trains need thousands of feet to come to a complete stop, and crashes with vehicles or trains carrying hazmat can have catastrophic results.

The best approach to addressing grade crossing safety needs is closing crossings— since this has negative effects on roadway network connectivity, this is not always an option. Grade separations also are helpful for removing the highway-rail conflict but are very expensive. Installing active warning devices and improving signage and markings at passive crossings also are helpful but depend on the cooperation of the public to be effective—and many crashes occur when drivers drive around the crossing gates despite being warned of an oncoming train. Other actions to reduce public safety risks include crossing profile improvements which can improve visibility for drivers and pedestrians and reduce the number of vehicles that get stuck or pinned on a crossing. Lighting also is helpful to increase visibility at the crossing and prevent drivers from driving off the crossing itself and onto the tracks which can cause low-clearance vehicles such as passenger cars to get stuck between the rails.

A primary focus of Louisiana's railroad safety efforts entails reducing the frequency and severity of incidents at highway-rail grade crossings through the installation or improvement of warning systems. Managed through DOTD's Railroad Safety Program, which includes funds from FHWA Section 130 program, state and/or railroad funds, typical investments include installation of warning devices such as lights and gates, installing raised medians to discourage driving around gates, signal upgrades, circuitry upgrades, crossing profile improvements, road configuration improvements, and crossing closures.

Table 61 presents the proposed grade crossing safety improvements provided by stakeholder and programmed by DOTD.

Table 61: Proposed Grade Crossing Safety Improvements

Project Name	Railroad(s)/ Stakeholder(s)	Project Description
AKDN Road Closures, Crossing Safety Improvement	AKDN	Closing of multiple road crossing within short distances on the railroad and placement of highway stop signs on state roads
Assessment of 130 crossings	BNSF	Study on 130 crossings to see which ones can use modification including overpass, underpass, gates, lights, and other updates
At Grade Crossing Closure – Frontage Road	CSX	At-Grade Crossing Closure - Frontage Road

Project Name	Railroad(s)/ Stakeholder(s)	Project Description
Minden Yard At-Grade Crossing Rehab	LAS	Crossing goes into the hospital, and it needs some rehab.
LA 3105: Underpass @ CPKC of I-20 H.009522	CPKC	Phase 2 (Env.): Eliminates crossing exposure, thus enhancing safety. Will also enhance the capacity of this high-volume roadway. Will also prevent traffic backups on I-20 ramp due to RR crossing.
CANAL UP RR Xing (IBERVILLE) H.012851	UP	Safety improvement at crossing; Upgrade signals
CHEEKS RD KCS RR Xing (OUACHITA) H.015478	CPKC	Safety improvement at crossing; Upgrade signals
CITY ST IC RR Xing (TANGIPAHOA) H.014308	IC	Safety improvement at crossing; Build road to close
COUVILLION ST KCS RR Xing (AVOYELLES) NA	CPKC	Safety improvement at crossing; Closure
Bayou Sale branch - Hwy 317 crossing total rehabilitation	LDRR	Bayou Sale branch - Hwy 317 crossing total rehabilitation
SEVERAL AKDN RR Xing (District 03) H.015160	AKDN	Safety improvement at crossing; upgrades
LA 18 STUDY UP RR Xing (JEFFERSON) H.015392	UP	Safety improvement at crossing; upgrades
Crossing Safety Improvements	Various Railroads	Grade crossing improvements
DAKIN ST NOPB RR Xing (JEFFERSON) H.013825	NOPB	Safety improvement at crossing; Upgrade or close; in conjunction with Monticello Ave.
DAVENPORT AVE UP RR Xing (MOREHOUSE) H.014904	UP	Safety improvement at crossing
DESOBRY UP RR Xing (IBERVILLE) H.012851	UP	Safety improvement at crossing; Upgrade signals
OLD US 80 LAS RR Xing (BEINVILLE) H.012873	LAS	Safety improvement at crossing; closure

Project Name	Railroad(s)/ Stakeholder(s)	Project Description
DURBIN RD. IC RR Xing (TANGIPAHOA) NA	IC	Safety improvement at crossing; Review if existing devices are sufficient.
Eliminate Grade Crossing at Saint Claude	NS	Eliminate Grade Crossing at Saint Claude & Press Street
LA 157 LAS RR Xing (BOSSIER) H.015389	LAS	Safety improvement at crossing; Upgrades
BENTON RD KCS RR Xing (BOSSIER) H.013021	CPKC	Safety improvement at crossing; Install raised median to discourage driving around gates
CALHOUN RD KCS RR Xing (OUACHITA) H.012439	CPKC	Safety improvement at crossing; Upgrade signals
HESTER IC RR Xing (ST JAMES) H.014469	IC	Safety improvement at crossing; Install 2 signals; close 1 more
OLD HWY 1/SR-3089 UP RR Xing (ASCENSION) H.010074	UP	Safety improvement at crossing; Review area with UP & District 61
LA 70 UP RR Xing (ASCENSION) H.010074	UP	Safety improvement at crossing; Review area with UP & District 61
THOMAS RD IC RR Xing (E. BATON ROUGE) H.014897	IC	Safety improvement at crossing; Review if existing devices are sufficient.
EMILY DR UP RR Xing (WEST BATON ROUGE) NA	UP	Safety improvement at crossing; remove sign and install CBA
LA 164 SPURS KCS RR Xing (WEBSTER) H.015132	CPKC	Safety improvement at crossing; Upgrades
SUMLIN RANCH RD KCS RR Xing (RICHLAND) H.015229	CPKC	Safety improvement at crossing; Try to close
HESTER IC RR Xing (ST JAMES) H.014441	IC	Safety improvement at crossing; Upgrade 2 crossing & geo; close 2

Project Name	Railroad(s)/ Stakeholder(s)	Project Description
CLYDE CHACHERE RD UP RR Xing (ALLEN) H.014931	UP	Safety improvement at crossing; Gate
HOLLIER BNSF RR Xing (LAFAYETTE) H.015172	BNSF	Safety improvement at crossing; Close
INDUSTRIAL BLVD UP RR Xing (IBERVILLE) H.002186	UP	Safety improvement at crossing; Close 1148
JULIA ST. KCS RR Xing (E. BATON ROUGE) H.012449	CPKC	Safety improvement at crossing; EBR Grant project, corridor improvements.
LA 175 KCS RR Xing (DESOTO) H.014462	CPKC	Safety improvement at crossing; Roadwork to make safer
CENTRAL AVE IC RR Xing (JEFFERSON) H.014910	IC	Safety improvement at crossing; DID DR
LA 63 IC RR Xing (LIVINGSTON) H.014933	IC	Safety improvement at crossing; Gate
OLLA UP RR Xing (LASALLE) H.001853	UP	Safety improvement at crossing; Upgrade signals and do roadwork to do closure.
SWAN AVE KCS RR Xing (EAST B R) H.015145	CPKC	Safety improvement at crossing; Close 1 of 5
Jeff Davis Main St BNSF RR Xing (JEFFERSON DAVIS) TBA	BNSF	Safety improvement at crossing; Closure
9TH ST UP RR Xing (ALLEN) H.015075	UP	Safety improvement at crossing; recommend closing this again
W FRANCIS ST UP RR Xing (WEST BATON ROUGE) H.015082	UP	Safety improvement at crossing; Upgrade - add CANTS

Project Name	Railroad(s)/ Stakeholder(s)	Project Description
MCGEE RD UP RR Xing (CADDO) H.015081	UP	Safety improvement at crossing; consider gates
4TH AVE UP RR Xing (JEFFERSON DAVIS) H.014938	UP	Safety improvement at crossing; Study for RRS
BARKSDALE BLVD UP RR Xing (BOSSIER) H.013708	UP	Safety improvement at crossing; REMOVE
US 165 UP RR Xing (ALLEN) H.015482	UP	Safety improvement at crossing; REMOVE
LA 782-2 KCS RR Xing (BOSSIER) H.015123	CPKC	Safety improvement at crossing; Study for RRS
LAS Road Closures	LAS	Working with DOTD on road closures.
SEVERAL DHPS RR Xing (DESOTO) TBA	DHPS	Safety improvement at crossing; CBA for Desoto
DORCY ROAD UP RR Xing (IBERVILLE) H.013438	UP	Safety improvement at crossing; Close and install signals
BAYOU JACOB RD UP RR Xing (IBERVILLE) H.013715	UP	Safety improvement at crossing; Add turn lane to decrease stopping on track and upgrade signals
LINCOLN PARK RD IC RR Xing (TANGIPAHOA) H.010702	IC	Safety improvement at crossing; Review with IC
RYAN ST LCHD (PRI) RR Xing (CALCASIEU) REQ	LCHD (PRI)	Safety improvement at crossing; Innovative warning being reviewed
SCHEX DR KCS RR Xing (BOSSIER) H.015208	CPKC	Safety improvement at crossing; Close 1 of 3
LEVY ST. UP RR Xing (CADDO) H.015475	UP	Safety improvement at crossing; Review if existing devices are sufficient.

Project Name	Railroad(s)/ Stakeholder(s)	Project Description
SCENIC HWY IC RR Xing (E. BATON ROUGE) H.013864	IC	Safety improvement at crossing; Upgrade signals
2 UPGRADES KCS RR Xing (District 61) H.015133	CPKC	Safety improvement at crossing; UPGRADES
WOODLAND DR KCS RR Xing (LINCOLN) H.009871	CPKC	Safety improvement at crossing; Still under review
SEVERAL IC RR Xing (TANGIPAHOA) H.010702	IC	Safety improvement at crossing; Still under review
JONES ST KCS RR Xing (RED RIVER) H.015199	CPKC	Safety improvement at crossing; DR try to close
OAK HILL ST KCS RR Xing (SABINE) TBA	CPKC	Safety improvement at crossing; Review Profile
Morning Glory UP RR Xing (EVANGELINE) H.015401	UP	Safety improvement at crossing; Added 2 crossings
PARDUE RD UP RR Xing (RAPIDES) H.015132	UP	Safety improvement at crossing; Study for RRS
VALLEY VIEW DR. UP RR Xing (CADDO) H.015400	UP	Safety improvement at crossing; Review if existing devices are sufficient.
MTPLEASENT-ZAC KCS RR Xing (E. BATON ROUGE) NA	CPKC	Safety improvement at crossing; Review if existing devices are sufficient.
EDDY WILLIAMS UP RR Xing (RAPIDES) NA	UP	Safety improvement at crossing; Review if existing devices are sufficient.
ASCENSION ST KCS RR Xing (ASCENSION) NA	CPKC	Safety improvement at crossing; Review if existing devices are sufficient.

Project Name	Railroad(s)/ Stakeholder(s)	Project Description
OAKDALE UP RR Xing (ALLEN) H.015122	UP	Safety improvement at crossing; Upgrade signals for Preempt
MAIN UP RR Xing (IBERVILLE) H.012851	UP	Safety improvement at crossing; Upgrade signals
Michoud Boulevard Grade Separation	CSX	Michoud Boulevard Grade Separated Crossing
OLD PLAIN DEALING UP RR Xing (BOSSIER) H.012271	UP	Safety improvement at crossing; Upgrade signals for Preempt
MONTICELLO AVE NOPB RR Xing (JEFFERSON) H.013825	NOPB	Safety improvement at crossing; Upgrade or close; in conjunction with Dakin St.
N ARDENWOOD IC RR Xing (EBR) H.014430	IC	Safety improvement at crossing; Gate
N FOSTER DR. IC RR Xing (EBR) H.014430	IC	Safety improvement at crossing; Gate
JACKSON ST. IC RR Xing (JEFFERSON) NA	IC	Safety improvement at crossing; Want to close
NOLA Grade Crossing Improvements	NS/City of New Orleans	Rehabilitation of 1940' & 1950's railroad grade separations
NOPB Road Closures	NOPB	NOPB, DOTD, and the City of New Orleans are working together to fund and apply for grants to for some crossing upgrades. Project remains under development and a specific list of roads is not yet available.
Baldwin BNSF RR Xing (ST MARY) H.011706	BNSF	Safety improvement at crossing; Construct road for closures
PLAQUEMINE ST UP RR Xing (IBERVILLE) H.012851	UP	Safety improvement at crossing; Closure
Port Rail Inc. Road Closures, Crossing Safety Improvements	PRI	Working with DOTD on road closures and upgrade crossing warning signals.

Project Name	Railroad(s)/ Stakeholder(s)	Project Description
LOCKLEY ST BNSF RR Xing (ST MARY) H.011706	BNSF	Safety improvement at crossing; Part of SP21 above
RAILROAD STREET KCS RR Xing (ASCENSION) H.013779	CPKC	Safety improvement at crossing; Build road to close
St. Mary BNSF RR Xing (ST MARY) H.011723	BNSF	Safety improvement at crossing; Roadwork to allow closure
CORRIDOR IC RR Xing (ST JOHN THE BAPTIST) H.013017	IC	Safety improvement at crossing; Install/upgrade signals on corridor with possible closures.
Road & Rail Congestion management	NS	Grade separation at LA 46 & NS crossing
W 19TH ST IC RR Xing (ST JOHN THE BAPTIST) H.013017	IC	Safety improvement at crossing; Part of C01 2016
W 2ND ST IC RR Xing (ST JOHN THE BAPTIST) H.013017	IC	Safety improvement at crossing; Part of C01 2016
CARDINAL ST. IC RR Xing (ST JOHN THE BAPTIST) H.013017	IC	Safety improvement at crossing; Part of C01 2016
W 15TH ST IC RR Xing (ST JOHN THE BAPTIST) H.013017	IC	Safety improvement at crossing; Part of C01 2016
Road & Rail Congestion management	NS	Grade separation at St. Bernard Highway
LA 3217 IC RR Xing (ST JOHN THE BAPTIST) H.013017	IC	Safety improvement at crossing; Part of C01 2016
FOURTH ST. IC RR Xing (ST JOHN THE BAPTIST) H.013017	IC	Safety improvement at crossing; Part of C01 2016
PINE ST IC RR Xing (ST JOHN THE BAPTIST) H.013017	IC	Safety improvement at crossing; Part of C01 2016

Project Name	Railroad(s)/ Stakeholder(s)	Project Description
W 1ST ST IC RR Xing (ST JOHN THE BAPTIST) H.013017	IC	Safety improvement at crossing; Part of C01 2016
LEGION ST IC RR Xing (ST JAMES) H.015173	IC	Safety improvement at crossing; Gate
SAMUEL JONES RD IC RR Xing (ST JAMES) H.015174	IC	Safety improvement at crossing; Gate
SYDNEY WOODS IC RR Xing (LIVINGSTON) TBA	IC	Safety improvement at crossing; Gate
GENE BALL RD UP RR Xing (RAPIDES) H.015479	CPKC	Safety improvement at crossing; Gate
GENE BALL RD UP RR Xing (RAPIDES) H.015479	UP	Safety improvement at crossing; Gate
Road & Rail Congestion management	UP	Grade separation at Nine Mile Point Rd. and UP crossing
Road & Rail Congestion management	NS	Grade separation at LA 39 & NS crossing
TX EASTERN RD UP RR Xing (BEAUREGARD) H.015481	UP	Safety improvement at crossing; Gate
NASH RD UP RR Xing (DESOTO) H.015479	UP	Safety improvement at crossing; Gate
LA 3126 / 16 AKDN RR Xing (ACADIA) H.015162	AKDN	Safety improvement at crossing; UPGRADES
E THIRD STREET BNSF RR Xing (LAFAYETTE) H.015068	BNSF	Safety improvement at crossing; Study for RRS
MUDD ST BNSF RR Xing (LAFAYETTE) H.015068	BNSF	Safety improvement at crossing; Study for RRS

Project Name	Railroad(s)/ Stakeholder(s)	Project Description
COOPER UP RR Xing (CALCASIEU) H.015649	UP	Safety improvement at crossing
SUPERIOR AVE IC RR Xing (WASHINGTON) H.010980	IC	Safety improvement at crossing; Upgrade signals
W PLAQUEMINE ST BNSF RR Xing (JEFFERSON DAVIS) H.012872	BNSF	Safety improvement at crossing; Remove the Doyle legs of the roadway intersection
W.W. HARLE UP RR Xing (IBERVILLE) H.012851	UP	Safety improvement at crossing; Upgrade signals

3.1.3 Multimodal Connectivity and Terminal Improvements

Enabling the free flow of goods between different transportation modes enhances the resiliency of the transportation system and the ability to mitigate potential disruptions. Terminals allow for goods to transfer between transportation modes such as rail freight, air cargo, water shipments, and trucks. Improving the connections between rail and other modes of freight transportation as well as addressing the needs at terminals helps to support the shifting of goods between modes and enhances the overall capacity and reliability of the transportation system. Terminal improvements, including intermodal, transload, and yard facility projects, capacity expansions, and building or upgrading terminal trackage support existing customers as well as attract new ones.

Customer access to rail service is a critical part of ensuring the future viability of rail transportation and business. Customer access can be improved by providing rail access to existing or new customers with new or improved connections to commercial and industrial developments, ports, intermodal, and transload facilities. Specific freight that currently is not being shipped by rail could be diverted to rail by constructing or rehabilitating a rail spur or enhancing or rehabilitating rail access to the state's transload and intermodal facilities, and the state's water ports.

Table 62 presents the multimodal connectivity and terminal improvements proposed by stakeholders.

Table 62: Proposed Multimodal Connectivity and Terminal Improvements

Project Name	Railroad(s)/ Stakeholder(s)	Project Description
New rail connection to UPRR for the Port of Caddo-Bossier	UP, Caddo-Bossier Parishes Port Commission	Establish new rail connection to UPRR for the Port of Caddo-Bossier.
Oliver Yard - Separate Switch Need for NS	NS	Separate switch needed
Freight lead extension into NS Oliver Yard	NS	Extending current freight lead into NS Oliver, from the existing 3,000' to 12,000', to help congestion on Back Belt. It would provide a place for all trains operating to/from or working at Oliver Yard to perform that work completely off Back Belt mainline trackage. New interchange flexibility will be vital to maintaining current and supporting future interchange operations in the gateway.
NOGC Rail Relocation	NOGC	Closure of 100 grade crossings in Gretna. Relocation of NOGC tracks south of New Orleans to access new port facilities. Cost estimated at 85% of project needs.
Transload facility – Engineering and Construction	NOPB	New transloading facility located South of Gentilly Yard on Terminal Rd Engineering and Construction
Port of Plaquemines Improvements – Container Terminal	NOGC, Port of Plaquemines	Development of a 200+ acre deepwater port capable of handling 13-14k TEU vessels; container and bulk rail handling capacity. The container terminal will contain a small rail yard that will enable the loading of containers onto intermodal rail flat cars.
Port of South Louisiana Expansion	CPKC, Port of South Louisiana	Further growth under consideration including rail.
Livonia Yard Improvements	UP	Reduce congestion in Livonia Yard.
Louisiana International Terminal	NS, Louisiana International Terminal	New terminal to be served by water, rail, truck. Possible infrastructure improvements on Chalmette Branch.
Port of Plaquemines 11 mile rail extension	NOGC, Port of Plaquemines	Extend current NOGC rail an additional 11 miles to directly serve current PPHTD customers, and provide access to the future container port.
Transload facility - Construction	NOPB	New transloading facility located South of Gentilly Yard on Terminal Rd – Construction.
Port Manchac Rail Expansion	CN, Port Manchac	New Rail Bridge to CN Mainline & 1,200 ft. of additional storage track.
Industrial Lead Railroad Rehabilitation Project	PRI, Port of Lake Charles	Rehabilitate existing track to re-establish intermodal short line freight rail connection to the Port of Lake Charles Industrial Canal Terminal
Industrial Park East Rail Yard	PRI, Port of Lake Charles	Construct new rail storage yard to support tenant operations. The project would also establish a new connection from the LED site to the UP short line rail.

3.1.4 Rolling Stock

While railroads and shippers generally acquire rolling stock through private funding, there is a role for public support in some areas, particularly in the realm of locomotives. With the lifespan

of locomotives measured in decades and costs for new ones in the millions, smaller railroads typically utilize power that does not meet current emissions standards. Thus, significant and cost-effective reductions in emissions can be gained by providing support to acquire new low-emission switching locomotives or retrofitting existing locomotives with auxiliary power units, which allows idle units to be shut down and readily restarted in cold weather. Locomotive modernizations also allow railroads to use locomotives with higher tractive effort, thereby reducing overall fleet requirements, reducing fuel consumption and increasing reliability.

Rolling stock improvements also include the acquisition of new or rehabilitated freight railcars such as cars specific to commodities that need to be moved. Louisiana has a robust market for chemical shipments. Tank cars, hopper cars, and other such railcars are useful for moving commodities to and from chemical plants. The acquisition of new railcars specific to common commodities in Louisiana will accommodate growth in rail shipments and give business owners more modal options.

Table 63 presents the proposed rolling stock improvements.

Table 63: Proposed Rolling Stock Improvements

Project Name	Railroad(s)/ Stakeholder(s)	Project Description
Equipment shortage	Various Railroads and Shippers	Single in-state facility manufacturing rail cars and there is currently a 2-3 year wait period for new equipment (railcars).

3.2 Passenger Rail Improvement Opportunities

Proposed passenger rail improvements include passenger service improvements, passenger service expansion projects, and multimodal connectivity improvements. Passenger service improvements include enhancing reliability to increase ridership; improving station accessibility, attractiveness, and utility; improving rolling stock to upgrade travel experience; and, adding track capacity to improve travel time, delays and operations. Passenger service expansion includes establishing service in routes not currently served by passenger rail, studying viability of passenger rail service expansion, extending existing passenger rail lines to service additional areas, and expanding existing passenger rail service. Passenger multimodal connectivity improvements provide connections between rail service and other transportation modes that are safe and convenient. Additionally, safety at grade crossings also is a concern for passenger trains. Grade crossing safety needs are discussed in **Section 3.1**, Freight Rail Improvement Opportunities.

3.2.1 Passenger Service Improvements

Passenger rail service is examined to determine how the operations and effectiveness of existing routes can be improved. Adding or enhancing stations can improve ridership through

increased connectivity to population and employment hubs. Adding or improving platforms can increase capacity for operations and passengers by increasing the number of simultaneous train boardings and alightings. Passenger station upgrades are also needed to meet ADA requirements.

Two factors that negatively impact passenger rail ridership are train schedules and the perception of unreliability of service, particularly in terms of overall travel speed and poor on-time train performance. Additional track capacity such as siding extensions and double-track extensions can improve the service reliability and schedule flexibility of both passenger and freight trains by allowing for increased passenger train frequency and reducing conflict with freight traffic.

Upgrades to rolling stock and equipment can both improve the reliability of the equipment and comfort for riders, which can help maintain or increase ridership. The replacement of Amtrak's rolling stock fleet to support existing and potential additional service is scheduled to be delivered in 2030 and is part of a larger Amtrak procurement that is being fully paid for by Amtrak using federal funds.[41]

Table 64 presents the passenger service improvements provided by Amtrak and NORPC.

[41] *Historic, multi-billion-dollar request for proposals tees up generational investment for the future of Long Distance intercity rail travel*. Amtrak press release December 22, 2023. Accessed June 2024.

Table 64: Proposed Passenger Service Improvements

Project Name	Railroad(s)/ Stakeholder(s)	Project Description
Hammond Station Improvements/ Upgrades	Amtrak	A. Replace two accessible ramp concrete lower landings adjacent to the existing platform and repair transitions. B. Replace detectable warning surface along the platform edge. C. Reset brick pavers along the accessible routes. D. Provide accessible ramp and landing at station entrance. E. Replace one accessible parking (long term) & drop off area. F. Reset noncompliant platform signage. G. Provide accessible threshold for the single swing track side entrance door and provide modifications to the existing door for a weather tight seal. H. Provide compliant automatic door opener for the single swing track side door and on parking side door leaf. I. Provide required maneuvering clearance for doors and recessed condition. J. Adjust double swing parking side door closers to accessible compliance and smooth operation. K. Address station interior non-compliant conditions per the post construction assessment report for ADA compliance. L. Repair or replace existing expansion joints and surrounding concrete area within the platform. M. Replace concrete pad for the exterior single swing door to meet ADA clearance floor area.
Lafayette Station Improvements/ Upgrades	Amtrak	A. New 200 feet long by 12 feet wide ADA compliant 8” top-of-rail (tor) platform. B. Provide new ADA access connection at north end. Provide connection to existing platform at south end. C. Provide new tactile edge and signage along new platform length. D. Provide platform lighting poles, fixtures, and associated conduit and wiring. E. Provide lighting relay panel for lighting.
New Iberia Station Improvements/ Upgrades	Amtrak	A. 500 feet long by 13 feet wide ADA compliant 8” above top-of-rail (ATOR) platform. B. Provide concrete accessible walkway between platform and parking area. C. Provide concrete accessible ramp from platform down to W Washington street d. Provide concrete ADA parking with striping and signage. E. Provide detectable walking surface edge and signage along platform length. F. Remove and reinstall existing waiting shelter. G. Provide wheel chair lift enclosure (WCLE). H. Provide platform lighting poles, fixtures, and associated conduit and wiring.
Schriever Station Improvements/ Upgrades	Amtrak	A. New 550’ 8” ATOR platform and accessible pathways. B. Provide pathways from station to access new platform. C. Provide platform lighting. D. Provide new signage.

Project Name	Railroad(s)/ Stakeholder(s)	Project Description
Slidell Station Improvements/ Upgrades	Amtrak	A. New 550' 8" ATOR platform and accessible pathways. B. Provide pathways from station to access new platform. C. Provide platform lighting. D. Provide new signage.
NOUPT Multi-Service Regional Rail Hub Improvements	NOUPT	Platform modifications (ADA, security, electrical, air, communications, and water systems), Canopy Repairs, and related Bus Area Renovations

3.2.2 Passenger Service Expansion

Passenger service expansion extends existing passenger rail lines to service new areas, expands existing passenger rail service by providing more frequent service, and establishes service in routes not currently served by passenger rail. Access to multimodal transportation options can divert passenger vehicle trips to safer and more environmentally friendly options like rail, and helps ensure equity for those who cannot or do not own a personal vehicle to access education, jobs, housing, healthcare, and other destinations.

The passenger rail expansion initiatives in the state include:

- Sunset Limited daily service (additional frequency): Increasing the frequency of this route, which operates between Los Angeles and New Orleans, from 3 days per week to daily service (7 days per week) provides riders with more options for when to travel and can improve ridership.
- Gulf Coast Corridor (new service): This ongoing project seeks to re-establish passenger rail service between New Orleans and Mobile, Alabama. Initial twice-daily round trips between New Orleans and Mobile are expected to launch in late 2023 or 2024. Additional service, including an extension east towards Florida, remains under consideration.
- Baton Rouge to New Orleans Corridor (new service): Project envisions twice-daily trips with stops in Baton Rouge, Gonzales, LaPlace, Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport, and the Union Passenger Terminal in New Orleans.
- I-20 Corridor (new service): Passenger rail along the I-20 corridor in North Louisiana would be an extension of the Amtrak Crescent train which currently terminates in New Orleans. This extension would connect major metropolitan areas such as New York, Atlanta, and Dallas/Fort Worth and expand access to passenger rail to communities without a current connection including Monroe and Shreveport.

More details on the status of these initiatives can be found in **Sections 1.8.2 and 1.8.4**. The details of the proposed passenger service expansion improvements for these initiatives are listed in **Table 65**.

Table 65: Proposed Passenger Service Expansion Improvements

Project Name	Railroad(s)/ Stakeholder(s)	Project Description
New Orleans – Gulfport - Mobile Intercity rail	Amtrak	Louisiana's contribution for covering implementation costs.
Shreveport/Bossier City - Dallas/Fort Worth and Future (intercity rail)	Amtrak	Environmental planning, design, and initial construction of route in Louisiana. Provides for enhanced mobility for Louisiana residents by instituting a new rail service on an intercity corridor linked only by highways.
Shreveport/Bossier City - Dallas/Fort Worth and Future (intercity rail)	Amtrak	Full construction of route and stations; Acquisition of rolling stock.
Sunset Limited daily service	Amtrak	This route operates between Los Angeles and New Orleans via Houston, San Antonio and El Paso, Texas; Tucson, Ariz.; and other communities. The frequency will be increased to daily service / 7 days per week
Baton Rouge - Shreveport Intercity Rail	Amtrak	Operate passenger service between Baton Rouge and Shreveport
Baton Rouge - New Orleans Intercity Rail - Grade Crossing/Bridge Replacement	CPKC, CN, Amtrak	Provides for enhanced mobility for Louisiana residents by instituting a new intercity passenger rail service on a corridor linked only by highways. Grade crossing, track and signal and replacement of the Bonnet Carre' spillway bridge are some of the infrastructure improvements identified for funding
Baton Rouge - New Orleans intercity rail - pre-construction engineering, environmental clearance, and station planning	CPKC, CN, Amtrak	Provides for enhanced mobility for Louisiana residents by instituting a new intercity passenger rail service on a corridor linked only by highways. The estimated cost represents remaining funding for pre-construction activities needed to implement four roundtrip service on the Baton Rouge - New Orleans corridor, excluding costs associated with the Grade Crossing/Bridge Replacement project.
Baton Rouge - New Orleans intercity rail - capital construction	CPKC, CN Amtrak	Provides for enhanced mobility for Louisiana residents by instituting a new intercity passenger rail service on a corridor linked only by highways. The estimated cost represents remaining funding for capital construction needed to implement four roundtrip service on the Baton Rouge - New Orleans corridor, excluding costs associated with the Grade Crossing/Bridge Replacement project.

3.2.3 Passenger Multimodal Connectivity

Multimodal connectivity to/from passenger rail service can be facilitated with operational enhancements and technological improvements. Some examples of such multimodal connectivity needs include seamless connections to rail service with safe and convenient bicycle facilities, walkable transit-oriented development compatible with passenger rail activity, and pedestrian amenities. Other multimodal connectivity needs include improving local and national coordination among freight and passenger rail systems; other modes of transportation (e.g. thruway bus service, cruise ship terminal, and transit); as well as with the Federal government, and the region. **Table 66** presents the multimodal connectivity improvements

proposed by stakeholders. DOTD is continuing to work alongside other agencies and stakeholders to identify strategies (discussed in **Chapter 4**) and projects for improving future multimodal connectivity of passenger rail in Louisiana.

Table 66: Proposed Passenger Rail Multimodal Connectivity Improvements

Project Name	Railroad(s)/ Stakeholder(s)	Project Description
Connection to Cruise Ship Terminals in New Orleans	Amtrak	Gulf Coast Service will have the opportunity to connect with the New Orleans cruise ship terminal
Local Transit Coordination	Amtrak and Local Agencies	Coordinate train arrivals with local transit schedules and routes.

4.0 Rail Service and Investment Program

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the rail service and investment program for Louisiana. It will prioritize the specific projects, programs, policies, and funding necessary to achieve the set vision and describe the financial and physical impacts of implementing the vision.

4.1 Recommended Policies and Strategies

Louisiana's rail program is administered by DOTD's Office of Multimodal Commerce Freight & Passenger Rail Program Division, supported by DOTD's Rail Safety Unit within the Office of Engineering. This Rail Plan does not recommend any changes to the office's duties, nor does it recommend the creation or abolition of any other agency or authorities. The proposed policies and strategies provided in **Table 67** are intended to address deficiencies and encourage preservation of the statewide rail network.

Table 67: Recommended Policies and Strategies

Proposed Strategy	Description	Need Addressed
Establish predictable, reliable rail funding sources.	Work with the administration and legislature to establish predictable, reliable funding sources to address the need for ongoing program and project operating costs. This includes for the established Short Line Railroad Infrastructure Improvement Program where funding can be unpredictable; for new grant programs or tax credit incentive programs for industry and port rail connections; and for passenger rail investment such as the proposed new passenger rail service between Baton Rouge and New Orleans. Successfully implemented by many other states, Local Rail Freight Assistance programs typically provide grants or low-cost loans to improve railroad infrastructure, while Industrial Rail Access Programs facilitate shipper access to rail service, typically through the rehabilitation or new construction of rail plant at shipper sites or transload facilities.	All
Seek grants and innovative funding approaches for freight and passenger rail.	Continue to position the state to pursue federal grant opportunities and collaborate with other public and private sector stakeholders such as state and local agencies, railroads, and ports on opportunities. Explore innovative funding sources, including public-private partnerships, multistate initiatives, and tax credits to support railroad investment.	All

Proposed Strategy	Description	Need Addressed
Preserve rail corridors for current and/or future transportation needs.	Dormant rail corridors offer significant potential for other transportation uses; historically, once a rail corridor is converted into a different use, it does not return to rail use. Preserving abandoned rail corridors for possible future rail usage is vital to ensuring that regions of the state do not lose access to the efficiencies, economies, and environmental benefits of rail service for both passenger and freight transportation.	All
Accommodate heavier rail cars (286k) and double-stack clearances.	Develop an implementation plan in coordination with the railroads to accommodate heavier rail cars (286k) and double-stack clearances in corridors as may be appropriate to market conditions. This plan should address the timing and funding of improvement projects to provide for connections to the region and the continental U.S.	SOGR/ Infrastructure
Increase resilience of the rail system to strengthen critical infrastructure and to prepare for increasing storm severity.	Work with railroads to identify priorities and funding to increase resilience. Support hardening projects to withstand natural disasters, maintain culverts, monitor erosion areas, support use of fuel cell technology for power backup at grade crossings, and consider physical improvements and agreements to be as ready as reasonable.	SOGR/ Infrastructure
Grow rail market opportunities.	Develop and utilize state and federal data resources to identify and evaluate rail market opportunities and to identify potential for modal diversion from highway to rail. Explore and develop potential freight rail role in new energy markets and other emerging technologies, and in properties along riverbanks with significant development potential.	Multimodal Connectivity
Preserve and fully use industrial land parcels with access to rail sidings as well as existing rail infrastructure and corridors.	Work with MPOs, RPCs, railroads, agencies, economic development groups, municipalities, etc. to update inventory of these properties and help publicize in a strategic manner. Maintain viability of industrial-zoned land near existing or potential sidings, spurs, etc. Implement cooperative efforts with railroads, shippers, and regional planning agencies to identify underused rail-served facilities and sites that may be developed to grow rail market opportunities.	Multimodal Connectivity

Proposed Strategy	Description	Need Addressed
Improve rail connectivity to ports.	Collaborate with the port authorities to identify and evaluate potential state investments in multimodal freight projects related to enhancing connectivity between ports and rail services.	Multimodal Connectivity and Terminal Improvement
Explore state's role to pilot emerging technologies and address rail car equipment needs.	Support pilots to test and implement technology to decrease emissions and increase safety, including electric railcars and locomotives, fuel cells, train automation, "Version 2" of PTC. Explore appropriate role of the state in addressing rail car equipment needs of Louisiana shippers.	Rolling Stock
Advocate for competitive rail service and pricing.	Continue proactive state role to advocate for better service and pricing for Louisiana shippers/ consignees.	Multimodal Connectivity
Expand passenger rail service and connections.	Expansion of passenger rail where feasible in the form of new services, extensions to existing service, or increased frequencies and connections to other modes. This includes reinstating service between New Orleans and Mobile, providing new service between New Orleans and Baton Rouge, and between Shreveport/Bossier City - Dallas/Fort Worth, and adding frequencies to existing service such as the Sunset Limited.	Passenger Service Expansion, Multimodal Connectivity
Improve transit, bicycle, and pedestrian connections to passenger rail stations.	Work with transit and tourist services, including the cruise terminal, to match scheduling, increase comfort, and increase reliability of transfers. Work with municipalities to develop station area plans, improve wayfinding, and enhance bicycle and pedestrian accommodations (crosswalks, grade crossings, paths/trails, bicycle lanes, bicycle parking).	Multimodal Connectivity
Advocate for railroad commitment to meet passenger rail on-time performance metrics.	Improving the performance of the passenger rail lines would allow the state to reap the benefits of intercity rail, which offers an environmentally-friendly transportation alternative to automobiles, providing opportunities to connect to the Louisiana's major economic centers and improving access to jobs, services, and labor markets.	Passenger Service Improvement

Proposed Strategy	Description	Need Addressed
Work with local municipalities on mitigating railroad impacts on communities.	Work with local municipalities to resolve conflicts between communities and railyard operation activities. Work with local municipalities to resolve safety and crime issues around railyards and rail terminals.	All
Continue to invest and support at-grade crossing upgrades, closures and elimination.	Invest in at-grade crossings to help prevent accidents, grade-crossing consolidations, and grade-crossing closures, as needed. Upgrade safety and railroad grade crossings by gate/light installations and closures of minor crossings. Continue to maintain SOGR of older grade separated crossings. New Orleans has many 1950's crossings.	Safety
Address/improve trespassing awareness.	Work with Highway Safety and Operation Lifesaver to develop a campaign to prevent trespassing on rail corridors.	Safety
Continue RAC meetings to provide space for stakeholder collaboration.	Regularly convene the RAC to discuss Rail Plan implementation, emerging needs, lessons learned, and partnership and funding opportunities. Continue working with the stakeholders to promote infrastructure improvements that are important to Louisiana's economic competitiveness and quality of life. Continued engagement by DOTD with the freight and passenger rail stakeholders will help demonstrate continued interest and inform DOTD on evolving needs and issues, as well as provide avenues for collaboration on opportunities to improve the State's transportation system.	All

4.2 Funding Louisiana's Rail Network

Maintaining an efficient and cost-effective rail system is vital for business creation and retention for the state. Rail lines for the most part are owned, maintained, and operated by private companies that fund and finance necessary improvements, short line railroads have much smaller operations than Class Is. These operators have difficulty generating enough revenue to maintain their infrastructure and may rely on outside sources to improve their operations.

Funding for railroad projects and programs originates from a variety of federal, state, local, and private sources. DOTD programs specific rail projects funded from the state's annual capital construction program. State law also grants the Louisiana Secretary of Transportation the authority to disburse federal rail funding and establish a state program from which loans and

grants can be provided to qualified entities. Competitive grants are another funding source, with federal programs typically covering up to 80% of project costs.

4.2.1 Louisiana Funding Programs

Louisiana complies with Title 49 USC § 22102, which pertains to its eligibility to receive federal financial assistance for rail projects. DOTD is the designated rail authority to distribute federal funding for rail projects in the state. State funding is made available to DOTD for specific rail projects through the programs identified in **Table 68**.

Table 68: Rail-Eligible Funding Programs

Program/Source	Eligible Rail Uses
Louisiana Transportation Trust Fund (TTF)	Highway-rail crossing improvements, and providing the matching share for federal grade crossing improvement funding
Parish Transportation Fund	Infrastructure critical to local roadway networks
Port Construction and Development Priority Program	Rail components of port improvement projects
Short line Railroad Infrastructure Improvement Program	Rail improvements to Class II and III railroads necessary to maintain efficient rail service

Source: DOTD

The Louisiana funding programs above are further explored in **Section 1.7**.

4.2.2 Other Public Funding Streams

As most railroads operate as private business entities, many routine upgrades and improvements occur without local, state, or federal support. Large projects with distinct public benefits, such as eliminating unsafe conditions at grade crossings or relieving congestion on a major freight route, may receive funding assistance. The following entities are also equipped to provide financial backing for rail projects in the state.

4.2.2.1 Louisiana Department of Economic Development

The Louisiana Department of Economic Development (LED) is the state's lead economic development agency. LED oversees various programs and services that create jobs, attract new investment, encourage community development, and promote Louisiana. The Department's Office of Business Development implements strategies to improve the economy by increasing capacity through education, training, and infrastructure investments. LED has worked with railroads to establish new facilities and provided grants through the state's Rapid Response fund to make infrastructure improvements necessary to retain employers. Most recently, in 2019, Gov. John Bel Edwards, joined by Port of Greater Baton Rouge and Louis Dreyfus

Company (LDC) officials, committed state capital outlay funds to complete a $20 million rail project that will enhance the transfer of corn, grain, soybeans and other commodities from Louisiana farmers to export vessels at the Port of Greater Baton Rouge in West Baton Rouge Parish.

Outside of funding rail improvement projects with significant public benefit, LED also provides funding through two programs dedicated to improving intermodal connectivity: the Ports of Louisiana Investor Tax Credit, and the Import Export Cargo Credit.

4.2.2.2 Federal Assistance

Louisiana, much like other states, utilizes funding from the federal government to complete rail projects. Federal rail funding can come from a variety of sources, including:

- Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) program.
- National Highway Performance Program (NHPP).
- Federal Highway Railroad Safety Program.
- Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) for railroad projects that interact with eligible highway infrastructure.
- Discretionary grant programs, such as Railroad Crossing Elimination (RCE), Restoration & Enhancement (R&E), INFRA, RAISE, and CRISI.

4.2.3 Rail Funding Best Practices From Other States

Railroad infrastructure is strongly associated with economic development and it is vital for the state's multimodal transportation system to ensure investment in this infrastructure continues. Importantly, rail funding does not need to rely solely on state or federal formula funds. Instead, funding mechanisms can include loans, grants, or tax credits, depending on the program. The following types of rail funding programs can be considered, and **Table 69** provides examples of these rail funding programs from other states.

- **Rail Preservation, Rehabilitation, and Improvement Program:** A rail preservation, rehabilitation, and improvement program provides grants or low-interest loans to support rail infrastructure. This program can include purchasing and/or improving abandoned rail lines, especially short lines, providing railroads the ability to acquire or improve railroad equipment, rolling stock, rights-of-way, and facilities directly related to servicing rolling stock. Additionally, the program can include the rehabilitation and improvement through grant/loan support of rail tracks and infrastructure to facilitate access to funding for a variety of entities—including counties, municipalities, railroads, ports, and other stakeholders.

- **Industrial Rail Access Program:** An industrial rail access program provides tax credits or grants to connect businesses to the rail network. The process includes an application for businesses to access funds or credits and monitoring and evaluation protocols that track the impact of investments on industrial growth and adjust program parameters as needed.
- **Short Line Modernization Tax Credit Program:** Many states have tax credit programs to support short line modernization. These programs often provide a percentage of investment tax credit, up to a certain dollar amount per mile of track restored or rehabilitated that is owned or leased by a taxpayer in the associated state.

Table 69: Rail Programs in Other States

State	Program Name	Details
Rail Preservation, Rehabilitation, and Improvement Grants and Loan Programs		
Virginia	Short line Railway Preservation and Development Fund (RPF)	Supports short line railroads in acquiring, leasing, or improving their railways and in the development of railway transportation support facilities.
Wisconsin	Freight Railroad Preservation Program	Provides state grants to cover cost to purchase abandoned rail lines in an effort continue freight service and/or rehabilitate facilities such as tracks and bridges on publicly owned rail lines. Recipients could be counties, municipalities, railroads, or others.
Michigan	Rail Loan Assistance Program	No-interest loans to railroads for rail infrastructure preservation and improvements that facilitate economic development
Pennsylvania	RTAP and RFAP	RTAP, a capital budget grant program funded with bonds; and RFAP, which is funded through the Multimodal Fund created by Act 89. Both programs provide financial assistance for investment in rail freight infrastructure, with the intent of preserving essential rail freight service and stimulating economic growth through new or expanded rail freight service.
New Jersey	Rail Freight Assistance Program	The grants help support economic activity by preserving and improving the existing freight transportation system and by making freight rail service more widely available for businesses throughout the state.
Illinois	Rail Freight Loan Program	Program that provides low interest loans to provide investments in private railroad companies that support statewide economic development.

State	Program Name	Details
Mississippi	Mississippi Local Government Revolving Loan Program	Low interest loans to counties or municipalities for freight rail service projects
Washington	Freight Rail Assistance Program	A grant program available to the public and private sector and provides funding for projects that are large and where the project is strategically important at the local, community, or state level.
Minnesota	Minnesota Rail Service Improvement Program	The Minnesota Rail Service Improvement Program provides grants for rail infrastructure projects in a variety of categories including: • Funding from both state general fund appropriations and general obligation bonding • Rail line rehabilitation program – low- or no-interest loans to railroads to rehabilitate and preserve rail lines • Rail purchase assistance program – helps regional rail authorities purchase rail lines • Rail User and Rail Carrier Loan guarantee Program, which helps shippers and carriers to obtain loans for rail rehabilitation and capital improvements by guaranteeing up to 90% of the loan; • Capital Improvement Loans, which lend rail users up to $200,000 or 100% of costs, whichever is less, to improve rail facilities, track connections, or loading, unloading, or transfer facilities; and • Rail Bank Program, which is used to acquire and preserve rail lines for future state, public, and commercial transportation needs. The goal of this program is to prevent the loss of rail and support economic development via rail infrastructure investments.
Oregon	Connect Oregon	Connect Oregon is a funding program focused on non-highway modes of transportation including rail, marine, and aviation. The projects are submitted to the program and are then presented for public comment before decisions. A 30% match is required (50% for Class I railroads) for projects.

State	Program Name	Details
Industrial Rail Access Programs		
Maine	Industrial Rail Access Program (IRAP)	IRAP provides financial assistance to businesses and shippers for investment in rail or freight rail related infrastructure located on, within or adjacent to the general railroad system. The intent of the program is to stimulate economic and employment growth through generation of new or expanded freight rail service and transportation efficiencies to Maine businesses as well as to enhance intermodal transportation in the state. This state investment will be matched at a minimum 50/50 level with local and/or private industry funds. Applicants are encouraged to provide a match that is greater than 50%.
Virginia	Rail Industrial Access (RIA)	Sponsored by the Virgina Economic Development Partnership, this program provides funds to construct railroad tracks for new or substantially expanded industrial and commercial projects having a positive impact on economic development in Virginia. This program is open to businesses, municipalities, local economic development entities, and railroads. Stipulations for funding include that it must be used for track facilities and engineering, but not for utility relocation or right-of-way acquisition. Recipients will be required to confirm that initial expectations regarding anticipated carload figures were met.
Short Line Modernization Tax Credit Programs		
Alabama	Rail Credit	Alabama provides for a refundable tax credit equal to 50% of an eligible taxpayer's qualified railroad rehabilitation expenditures. A rail carrier that owns or leases railroad infrastructure in Alabama and is classified by the STB as a Class II or Class III railroad is eligible to apply for the Rail Credit. The Rail Credit application must include a rehabilitation plan and estimated qualified railroad rehabilitation expenditures.

State	Program Name	Details
Arkansas	Railroad Modernization Tax Credit	income tax credit equal to 50% of the eligible taxpayer's railroad track maintenance expenditures. Eligible taxpayer means a railroad classified as a Class II or Class III railroad by the United States Surface Transportation Board. Expenditures are for maintenance, reconstruction, or replacement of railroad track. The maximum amount of credit is $5,000 per mile of track owned or leased by the railroad. This is a non-refundable credit and can be carried forward for up to five (5) years.
Florida	Railroad Reconstruction & Replacement Expenditures Credit	credit against the Florida corporate income tax imposed by Chapter 220, Florida Statutes (F.S.), equal to 50% of a qualifying railroad's qualified expenditures incurred in Florida during the taxable year. The amount of the credit may not exceed $3,500 multiplied by the number of miles of railroad track owned or leased within Florida by the qualifying railroad as of the end of the calendar year prior to the taxable year in which the qualified expenditures were incurred. Only one application may be filed per qualifying railroad per taxable year.
Georgia	Railroad Track Maintenance Tax Credit	Tax credit for Class III railroads for up to 50% of qualified railroad track maintenance expenditures. The credit cannot exceed $3,500 times the mile of each railroad track owned or leased in Georgia.
Kansas	Short Line Railroad Tax Credit	Tax credit that is available for any tax payer that has invested in qualified railroad track maintenance in Kansas and is owned or leased by an eligible Kansas taxpayer. The credit cannot exceed $5,000 per mile of track or siding owned or leased in Kansas.
Kentucky	Railroad Maintenance and Improvement Tax Credit / Railroad Expansion Tax Credit	The state provides a tax credit for qualified railroad expenditures made to improve railroads in Kentucky, The credit is equal to 50% of the expenditure, not to exceed $3,500 per mile of railroad track in Kentucky that is owned or leased by the taxpayer.
Minnesota	Short Line Railroad Infrastructure Modernization Tax Credit	Tax credit for qualified reconstruction or replacement expenditures of railroads and railroad infrastructure, including track, bridges, and others, in Minnesota. The credit is equal to 50% of the qualified expense, up to $3,000 per track mile.

State	Program Name	Details
Mississippi	Rail Infrastructure Tax Credit for Short Lines	The state provides a 50% credit for the development of new rail infrastructure that serves businesses adjacent to Class II/III railroads supporting rail-served locations, enhancing accessibility and economic potential.
Missouri	Tax Credit for Qualified Railroad Infrastructure Improvements	The state provides a tax credit for qualified railroad expenditures made to improve railroads in Missouri, The credit is equal to 50% of the expenditure, not to exceed $5,000 per mile of railroad track in Kentucky that is owned or leased by the taxpayer, and the total amount of tax credits per calendar year cannot exceed $4.5 million..
Oklahoma	Railroad Modernization Tax Credit	The Oklahoma industrial development tax credit provides a 50% credit for the development of qualified railroad reconstruction or replacement of rail infrastructure for Class II and III railroads.
Oregon	Tax Credit for Short Line Railroad Rehabilitation	A tax credit for the costs incurred for short line rehabilitation. Tier I short line railroad investments are eligible for up to $1,000 per mile of short line track in Oregon; Tier II short line railroad investments are eligible for up to $3,500 per mile of short line track in Oregon; or up to 50% of the cost incurred by the tax payer.

Source: Various state agency program websites

4.3 Rail Program Effect and Benefits

The proposed rail projects presented in Chapter 3, with more details provided in Appendix A, as well as the recommended strategies in Section 4.1 would produce both public and private benefits to Louisiana. The investment program and implementation of recommended strategies will result in a range of impacts to Louisiana's residents, visitors and businesses, and the State's economy and transportation system.

Improved efficiency of movement benefits Louisiana industries, residents, and visitors through expanded market reach and/or transportation cost savings. Public investment in rail offers Louisiana's residents and businesses a cost-effective and environmentally friendly means to move people and products that support the economy's operation. Passenger rail is a reliable and efficient alternative in busy travel corridors, while freight rail offers a cost-effective means to move large volumes of freight and diverts trucks from highways—benefiting both the truck and auto travelers that remain.

Depending on the proposed improvement, the range of impacts will vary, resulting in benefits to both the broader public as well as private enterprise. For both passenger and freight initiatives, the principal requirement is that they produce compelling public benefits, which can be either direct or indirect. The initiatives identified in this rail plan are expected to produce a range of such benefits with broad public impacts, including increased safety, better air quality through improved competitiveness of rail versus highway transport, economic development potential, and improved financial viability of the state's rail service.

The potential impacts and examples by improvement type are presented in **Table 70**. The benefits and examples are not exhaustive but rather illustrative in nature.

Table 70: Potential Program Effects by Improvement Type

Improvement Type	Potential Benefits	Example(s)
Freight Rail Elements		
SOGR / Infrastructure Upgrade	Ensure that rail service is competitive and market relevant. Improve safety. Enhance resilience. Improve operational performance. Reduce ongoing maintenance costs	• Rail and tie replacement projects • Bridge upgrade and rehabilitation • Construction of passing sidings • Double-stack clearance • Improvements to accommodate 286k freight cars • Rail relocation • Restoration of abandoned rail line • Increase interchange capacity • Adding double main line
Grade Crossing Safety	Improve road and rail safety. Decrease risks, improve operational efficiency.	• Installation/upgrade of lights, gates, signage, crossing surface replacement, etc. • Grade crossing separation
Multimodal Connectivity and Terminal Improvement	Increase competitiveness of Louisiana industry by improving modal access and expanding market options. Reduce transportation costs. Reduce truck VMT. Improve rail operational efficiency. Support economic development.	• New/improved intermodal (rail/highway or rail/water) terminals, bulk transload and carload facility improvements • New/improved rail connection to port, rail yard, transload and carload facility • New/improved track linking rail network to current or new customers

Improvement Type	Potential Benefits	Example(s)
Rolling Stock	For freight rail cars, ensure supply of market-responsive rolling stock for Louisiana industry, reduce truck VMT. For locomotives, improve operational efficiency and productivity, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, improve reliability	• Acquisition of rolling stock not available from other sources, such as log cars facing mandated retirement and railcars for chemical products
Passenger Rail Elements		
Passenger Service Improvement	Increase utilization of passenger service. Improve financial performance. Reduce highway VMT and associated collateral impacts	• Faster scheduled running times • Better access with additional stops • Improve customer experience through station modernization and • New rolling stock
Passenger Service Expansion	Improve mobility options for travelers. Reduce VMT, GHG emissions, highway congestion. Improve safety.	• Increased frequencies • Implement service in regions not presently served by rail
Passenger Multimodal Connectivity	Expand mobility options for travelers. Improve travel experience. Reduce environmental impact from travel.	• Improve multimodal connections (transit, bike/ped, etc.) to rail stations

The passenger rail program will result in projects that provide a range of benefits to Louisiana residents and visitors, users and non-users alike. Passenger rail users may divert from other modes of transportation including highway, air, and intercity bus. Although the potential for diverting passengers from air to rail is limited, passenger rail service can provide more direct access to a greater number of regions in the state than is the case with commercial air service. Passengers may also benefit from travel cost savings, particularly over air. By diverting to rail, gains in environmental and safety impacts are possible because trains can transport large numbers of passengers more safely and fuel efficiently than many other modes. Non-users benefit from the modal diversion through reduced emissions and increased highway capacity and reductions in highway maintenance costs when drivers switch from auto to rail.

The state's principal influence with service reliability is safety-related through improvements in grade crossings. Such projects reduce the likelihood of incidents between motor vehicles,

pedestrians, and cyclists with trains, thereby reducing injuries, fatalities, and property damage. Station improvements (such as modernizing platforms) can reduce station delays and mitigate passenger safety risks. In addition, capacity improvements on host railroad routes used by Amtrak service can benefit service reliability.

The freight rail program results in projects that impact the State's transportation system by providing public and private benefits to users and non-users. Users of freight rail may divert shipments from highway and potentially air and maritime modes. Because trains transport large volumes of freight over long distances with greater fuel efficiency and safely than many other modes, there are environmental and safety benefits to diverting shipments to rail. Typically, rates for shipping by rail are lower than for truck, particularly over longer distances, thus providing cost savings for shippers switching from truck to rail. On average, one rail car can take three to four trucks off the road, freeing up highway capacity. Heavy trucks also cause substantially more damage to roads than automobiles due to their weight and use more fuel to move an equivalent amount of freight than trains. Non-users therefore benefit from the modal diversion of truck to rail through reduced highway congestion, and reductions in highway maintenance costs and crashes involving trucks, reliance on fossil fuels, and the associated emissions.

4.4 Passenger and Freight Rail Capital Program

Short-term (2024–2027) and long-term (2028–2043) capital expenditures are summarized in **Table 71** below. The program of projects presents a snapshot of the stakeholder input received at the time of the development of this SRP, it is not meant to be an exhaustive list. The total short-term capital program for freight and passenger rail projects envisions expenditures of $447 million in known costs. Approximately $373 million and roughly 83% of the total short-term planned investments, with known costs, are for the freight rail network, with significant investments in infrastructure upgrades and multimodal connectivity and terminal improvements. In terms of long term planned investments, expenditures worth $4.9 billion are envisioned for freight and passenger rail projects in Louisiana. Of which, about 84% of the known costs are for freight rail projects, and the rest is for the passenger rail projects.

The projects are listed in **Appendix A** with a project description, project type, location, rail carrier(s) on which the improvement will occur, and the estimated costs, where available.

Table 71: Summary of Passenger and Freight Rail Capital Program

Program and Project type	Short-term (2024-27)		Long-Term (2028-43)	
	Count of Projects	Estimated Cost ($ Million)	Count of Projects	Estimated Cost ($ Million)
Freight Rail Element				
Grade Crossing Safety	70	$20.89	40	$222.93
Multimodal Connectivity & Terminal Improvement	5	$64.40	7	$3,025.22
SOGR / Infrastructure Upgrade	27	$287.43	9	$899.09
Rolling Stock	-	-	1	-
Freight Rail Total	***102***	***$372.72***	***58***	***$4,147.24***
Passenger Rail Element				
Passenger Service Expansion	3	$61.63	6	$786.94
Passenger Service Improvement	6	$12.70	1	$11.70
Passenger Multimodal Connectivity	1	-	1	-
Passenger Rail Total	***10***	***$74.33***	***8***	***$798.64***
Total Rail Program	**112**	**$447.05**	**66**	**$4,945.88**

Note: Costs are not complete as some project costs are yet to be determined. See Appendix A for details.

4.5 Rail Studies and Reports

There are a number of next steps and studies that will enhance the development of existing and future initiatives and continue to improve system performance. DOTD, on its own or in conjunction with other parties will embark on a few studies pertinent to its passenger and freight rail systems. These are presented in **Table 72**.

Table 72: Proposed Rail Planning Efforts and Next Steps

Corridor / Plan Title	Plan Description	Lead Agency
Baton Rouge - New Orleans Intercity Rail	• Service Development Plan following guidance from FRA Corridor Identification Program • NEPA Environmental Assessment for overall corridor • NEPA Environmental Clearance for proposed station locations • Pre- NEPA Environmental Clearance for overall corridor	DOTD

Corridor / Plan Title	Plan Description	Lead Agency
Shreveport/Bossier City - Dallas/Fort Worth Intercity Rail	Service Development Plan for introduction of intercity rail service between Shreveport/Bossier City and Dallas/Fort Worth	DOTD, SRC and Amtrak
Shreveport/Bossier City - Baton Rouge Intercity Rail	Feasibility Study for passenger rail service between Baton Rouge and Shreveport/Bossier City.	DOTD, SRC and Amtrak
Statewide Port Strategy	Port prioritization strategy to provide guidance from the State on prioritization of investments and needs for 32 ports.	DOTD

5.0 Plan Coordination and Review

Outreach and thoughtful engagement of key stakeholders is integral to development of the LA SRP. Input from rail shippers, rail carriers, government representatives, and industry representatives was crucial for understanding local, regional, and statewide rail needs and reflected a great deal of interest in expanding the role of the rail system in addressing Louisiana's freight and passenger transportation needs.

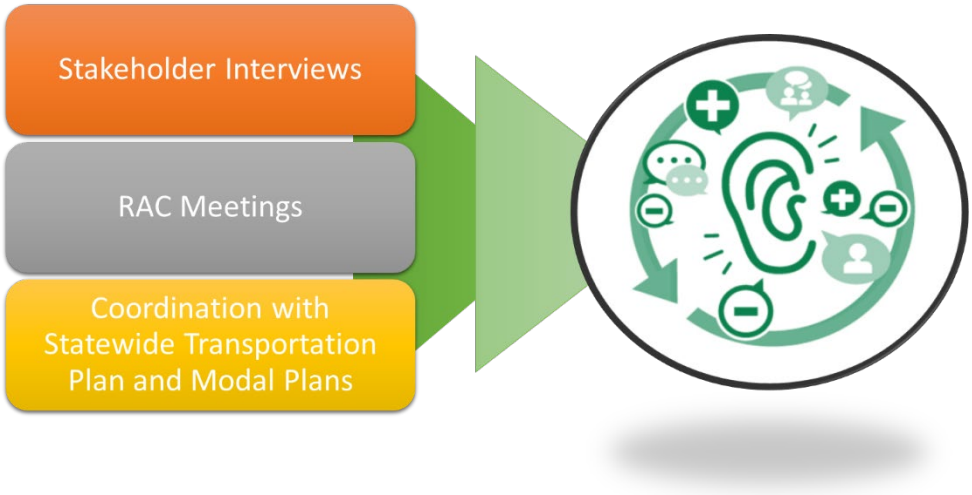
This chapter delves into how stakeholders were involved in the development and coordination of the SRP. Findings from the stakeholder engagement process are also discussed in detail.

5.1 Approach to Public- and Private-Sector Stakeholder Participation

Thoughtful stakeholder outreach and engagement was structured to receive targeted feedback about the needs and issues faced by Louisiana's rail system stakeholders and users.

There are three critical elements of this outreach, as shown in **Figure 47**: key stakeholder interviews, the state RAC including direct engagement with the RAC members on rail needs and projects, and coordination with the STP and Modal Plans (discussed in **Section 1.5**). The following sections will detail the outreach process and outcomes in engaging each of these stakeholder groups.

Figure 47: Stakeholder Engagement to Inform the Plan



5.1.1 Stakeholder Interviews

Semi-structured, one-on-one stakeholder interviews were conducted to better understand the needs and issues faced by Louisiana's rail system stakeholders and users throughout the state and get targeted feedback. The project team reached out to a range of stakeholders: railroads, shippers, logistics service providers, ports, public sector agencies and planning partners,

research institutes, and passenger rail organizations and service providers. See **Figure 48** for specific stakeholder organizations interviewed under each of these categories.

Figure 48: Stakeholder Interviewees

** Interviews conducted by the State Freight Plan project team during site visits.*

A total of 14 stakeholder interviews were conducted virtually and 2 interviews were conducted as part of site visits to the state ports. The purpose of the interviews was to collect detailed input on rail needs and opportunities in Louisiana from a variety of perspectives. The interview questions included topics such as description of the business, organization, or agency; nature of rail operations or use in Louisiana; supply chain structure; impacts of COVID-19; rail operating conditions; rail infrastructure and equipment condition; rail service needs; regulatory or policy challenges; recommendations for improving the passenger and freight rail system; impacts of Class I acquisitions in Louisiana; investment plans for expansions/ growth/ infrastructure improvements; and key trends/issues impacting the industry or relevant to the organization. The **Tech Memo 2: Stakeholder Interview Summaries Report** provides the interview guide utilized for conducting the stakeholder interviews.

5.1.2 Rail Advisory Committee (RAC)

DOTD engaged a RAC regularly throughout the course of the development of the plan. The RAC was intended to convene passenger rail and freight rail stakeholders that would be able to provide general guidance as well as technical feedback and review the findings and recommendations of the rail plan. This group convened at three points over the course of the *LA SRP* development. The content of those meetings was as follows:

- **Meeting 1 (November 15, 2023):** The project team presented the project background and timeline and solicited feedback on the draft vision and goals, and findings from the stakeholder outreach. Participants also were prompted to contribute thoughts using

interactive polling (menti poll) to provide input on trends, issues, and opportunities to support passenger and freight rail.

- **Meeting 2 (April 1, 2024):** The project team provided updates on technical activities, including existing and future conditions of the rail system, and demand forecasts and trends findings. The team also solicited input on the proposed improvements and recommendations.
- **Meeting 3 (July 8, 2024):** Final meeting to review the final draft *LA SRP*, economic impact analysis of rail, recommendations, and investment program.

Table 73 summarizes stakeholders invited to participate in the RAC.

Table 73: Rail Advisory Council Membership

Stakeholder Type	Organization Name
DOTD	• DOTD Freight and Passenger Rail Program • DOTD Transportation Planning • DOTD Emergency Operations
Freight Railroads	• Acadiana Railway • Arkansas Louisiana & Mississippi Railroad • BNSF Railway • Canadian National Railroad • Canadian Pacific Kansas City • CSX Transportation • Delta Southern Railroad/ Patriot Rail • Genesee & Wyoming Railroad Services, Inc. • Louisiana & Delta Railroad • Louisiana Association of Railroad Passengers • New Orleans Public Belt Railroad • Norfolk Southern Corp • Port Rail, Inc. • Rio Grande Pacific Corporation N.O. Gulf Coast Railway • Union Pacific Railroad • Watco Companies LLC
Passenger Rail	• Amtrak • Louisiana Association of Railroad Passengers • Southern Rail Commission
Ports	• Port of New Orleans • Port of South Louisiana • Port Plaquemines • Ports Association of Louisiana

Stakeholder Type	Organization Name
Regional and Local Partners	• Acadiana MPO • Alexandria MPO • Baton Rouge MPO • Houma-Thibodaux MPO • Lake Charles MPO • Monroe MPO • New Orleans MPO • Shreveport MPO
State and Federal Partners	• Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality • Louisiana Economic Development • Louisiana Workforce Commission • Federal Railroad Administration - South Central Region • Arkansas Department of Transportation • Mississippi Department of Transportation • Texas Department of Transportation
Trade and Industry Associations	• Louisiana Chemical Association • Louisiana Forestry Association • Louisiana Oil and Gas Association • Louisiana Railroad Association • Louisiana Sugar Cane Coop • Short Line and Regional Railroad Association

5.2 Summary of Feedback

Stakeholder outreach via RAC meetings and one-on-one interviews brought forward a range of themes for consideration. The following sections organize these findings into trends, issues, needs, and opportunities for Louisiana's rail network.

5.2.1 Trends

Several trends affecting the current operations and future prospects of rail in Louisiana were revealed by the stakeholders in the one-on-one interviews and RAC meetings. **Table 74** summarizes these trends.

Table 74: Stakeholder Summary: Trends

Focus Area	Trends
Market trends	• Strong volumes of chemicals and plastics with petrochemical base expected; plastics growth may slow down due to federal policy and environmental concerns over next 30 years. • Increasing market for wood pellets. • Coal volumes continue to be reasonably high, despite a shift to alternative fuels and natural gas. • Renewable fuels are expected to continue to grow (e.g. batteries). • Emerging renewable energy along the Mississippi River Corridor, along with the west bank growth potential/developable land. • Decrease in intermodal since COVID-19. • Growing container and overall cargo market in southeast Louisiana.
Demand Trends	• Amtrak was impacted by COVID-19, but capacity is slowly returning, and ridership is strong, north of 90% of pre-covid ridership levels nationally.
Business Practices	• Post COVID-19 and supply chain crisis - industries want more options for shipping in case something goes wrong. • Distributors have shifted from a few large facilities to numerous smaller facilities throughout the country to build more flexibility and redundancy into the supply chain.
Regulatory Trends	• FRA heightened sense of inspection and oversight for chemical and hazmat shipments. • Chemical regulations in Europe will shift operations/growth to U.S.
Funding Trends	• Increased availability of funding (Federal and State).

5.2.2 Issues and Needs

Outreach also pointed to several challenges experienced by stakeholders and the general public. **Table 75** summarizes these issues and needs.

Table 75: Stakeholder Summary: Issues and Needs

Focus Area	Issues and Needs
State of Good Repair (SOGR)/ Infrastructure Upgrade	• Short line railroads face SOGR, 286k lbs. track, and bridge replacement needs. • Additional capacity needs at the New Orleans Gateway. • Congestion issues, e.g., issues with wooden bridges and delays at at-grade crossings. • Replacement of Almonaster Avenue Bridge. • Backups and infrastructure needs in Plaquemines Parish.

Focus Area	Issues and Needs
Passenger Rail	• Lack of consistent on-time performance. • Capacity and safety upgrades to accommodate passenger rail: BR-NOLA, Gulf Coast line, and through New Orleans gateway. • New Orleans train station improvements. • Increase Sunset Limited frequency to 7 days a week. • Passenger rail investments in first/last mile systems/connections, e.g., in/out of New Orleans. • Explore feasibility of Monroe to Shreveport connection in passenger rail study.
Resiliency	• Build resiliency to protect rail assets, e.g., CSX Gulf Coast line hardening project. • Impacts of extreme weather events to operations, e.g., slow orders due to high temperatures.
Safety	• At-grade crossing upgrades and eliminations (e.g., Michoud Blvd New Orleans, Slidell, Metairie Rd, St. Claude Ave).
Multimodal Connectivity and Terminal Improvement	• Build Louisiana International Terminal. • Criminal activity around Gentilly yard.
Collaboration and Partnerships	• Productive collaboration between Amtrak, Class I's and public agencies. • Promote local involvement on review of guidelines and rules relative to rail crossings.
Corridor Preservation	• Preserve rail ROW.
Land Use	• Conflicts between communities and railyard operation activities.
Funding	• Expand short line rail grant application to provide more funding, including to help industry connect to short line railroads. • State can have difficulties with state match for federal grants. • More funding needed for rail projects, especially to plan and support maintenance programs for all new and existing infrastructure. • Explore use of a short line tax credit to support railroad investment to address deferred maintenance from previous owners. This is a popular strategy in other states.

5.2.3 Opportunities

Engagement with stakeholders highlighted several opportunities for rail in Louisiana. The topics listed in **Table 76** represent areas for potential growth or improvement in rail service in the state.

Table 76: Stakeholder Summary: Opportunities

Focus Area	Opportunities
Multimodal Connectivity - Bolstering Deepwater and Port Capabilities, Connecting Rail and Pipelines	• The Port of New Orleans is considering a new container terminal on the NS network. • Port of South Louisiana for further growth and expansion. • Port of Plaquemines is exploring a new container facility and a deep-water facility with rail connection. • Lake Charles Port is exploring a rail connection.
Partnerships and Operations	• CPKC-CSX deal over Meridian & Bigbee shortcut could shift some of New Orleans gateway traffic. • Factor in multimodal trade routes when assessing rail projects.
Economic Development	• In South Louisiana (between Baton Rouge and New Orleans) there are many properties along the riverbanks with significant development potential. These properties have rail on both sides of the river (UP and CPKC), with connections to pipelines, rail, and water transport. • Offer financial incentives to businesses that locate or expand along rail lines.
Passenger Rail Service	• Gulf Coast service New Orleans to Mobile. • Baton Rouge and New Orleans. • Study feasibility of service between Meridian and Fort Worth.

5.3 Consideration of Feedback

LA SRP stakeholder engagement activities sought to use public and other stakeholder input to generate content and set the direction of the Rail Plan. This included identification of potential infrastructure projects and considerations for passenger service improvements.

Appendix A: Freight and Passenger Rail Program of Projects

This section provides detailed listing of the freight and passenger rail projects. Separate tables are provided for short- and long-term initiatives. Within each table, projects are sorted by project name and railroad/stakeholder involved, and includes a brief description, the project type, project location, and the estimated implementation cost.

Table 77: Short-Term 2024-2027 Freight Program Investments

Project Name	Railroad/ Stakeholder	Project Description	Project Type	Project Location	Estimated Cost
Ties, surface, and switch upgrade	BRS	Ties, surface, and switch upgrade	SOGR / Infrastructure Upgrade	East Baton Rouge Parish	$1,700,000
Establish new rail connection to UPRR for the Port of Caddo-Bossier	UP, Caddo-Bossier Parishes Port Commission	Establish new rail connection to UPRR for the Port of Caddo-Bossier	Multimodal Connectivity & Terminal Improvements	Caddo/Bossier Parishes	$3,000,000
Crossovers at St. Johns, Elysian Fields, and Terminal Junction	NS	Install crossovers at St. Johns, Elysian Fields, and Terminal Junction in Gulf Coast line	SOGR / Infrastructure Upgrade	New Orleans	TBD
Upgrade and Improve Intersection	PRI, BNSF, CPKC	Upgrade and Improve Intersection	SOGR / Infrastructure Upgrade	City Of Lake Charles	$7,650,000
Loring Siding Extension Beaumont	CPKC	Siding extension at Loring (MP 625.9, Converse - Fisher Segment	SOGR / Infrastructure Upgrade	Loring, LA	$4,420,243
Mansfield Siding Extension Beaumont	CPKC	Siding extension at Mansfield (MP 377), Frierson-Converse Segment	SOGR / Infrastructure Upgrade	Mansfield, LA	$5,693,088
Minden Yard At-Grade Crossing Rehab	LAS	Crossing goes into the hospital, and it needs some rehab.	Grade Crossing Safety	Webster Parish	TBD
Monroe to Bastrop Track Surface and Alignment	ALM	Losing surface and alignment on the track. Stabilization required. 4 years before another tie cycle	SOGR / Infrastructure Upgrade	Ouachita and Morehouse Parishes	TBD

Project Name	Railroad/ Stakeholder	Project Description	Project Type	Project Location	Estimated Cost
New Orleans Rail Gateway	BNSF, CN, CSX, CPKC, NS, UP	Freight Rail Investment for speedier interchanges for Class I Railroads, with resulting operating cost savings. Closures of numerous grade crossings, resulting in enhanced safety and congestion mitigation, i.e., elimination of traffic delays at crossings. Provides congestion mitigation. Initial construction of the project. Cost estimated at 10% of project needs	SOGR / Infrastructure Upgrade	Jefferson and Orleans Parishes	$53,264,294
Bridges, rail, ties, and grade crossing upgrades	DSRR	Bridges, rail, ties, and grade crossing upgrades	SOGR / Infrastructure Upgrade	Madison/East Carroll Parishes	$17,700,000
LA 3105: Underpass @ CPKC of I-20 H.009522	CPKC	Phase 2 (Env.): Eliminates crossing exposure, thus enhancing safety. Will also enhance the capacity of this high-volume roadway. Will also prevent traffic backups on I-20 ramp due to RR crossing.	Grade Crossing Safety		$1,817,241
Construct two new sidings	DSRR	Construct two new sidings	SOGR / Infrastructure Upgrade	Madison Parish	$3,400,000
Singer Siding Extension Beaumont	CPKC	Siding extension at Singer (MP 705.1), Neame - Helme Segment	SOGR / Infrastructure Upgrade	Singer, LA	$5,357,520
Bayou Sale branch - New rail and ties upgrade	LDRR	Area with service to carbon black customers. Small rail needs to be upgraded to a bigger size. It's currently 90lbs but we need to get up to 115lbs. Our tie conditions are about a 2.5 on a scale of 1 to 5, 5 being the best. With smaller rail we have to travel at lower speeds for safety reason which disadvantages us and our customers. We are closing out our 7 year tie cycle.	SOGR / Infrastructure Upgrade		TBD
Ties, surface, and switch upgrade	DUSR	Ties, surface, and switch upgrade	SOGR / Infrastructure Upgrade	Ascension Parish	$720,000
Ties and surface, rail	GOGR	Ties and surface, rail	SOGR / Infrastructure Upgrade	East Baton Rouge/East Feliciana Parishes	$1,001,228

Project Name	Railroad/ Stakeholder	Project Description	Project Type	Project Location	Estimated Cost
Restoration of abandoned rail line	GLSR	Restoration of abandoned rail line	SOGR / Infrastructure Upgrade	East Baton Rouge/East Feliciana Parishes	$65,000,000
Breaux Bridge - Upgrade ties, ballast, and grade crossings	LDRR	Breaux Bridge - Upgrade ties, ballast, and grade crossings	SOGR / Infrastructure Upgrade	Lafayette/St. Martin/ St. Mary Parishes	$1,690,000
Ties, surface, ballast and rail upgrade	LDRR	Ties, surface, ballast and rail upgrade	SOGR / Infrastructure Upgrade	Terrebonne Parish	$788,000
Track raise to help with drainage & crossings being closed in the area	BNSF	Track Raise to help with drainage & crossings being closed in the area	SOGR / Infrastructure Upgrade	New Iberia	TBD
Transload facility - Engineering and Construction	NOPB	New transloading facility located South of Gentilly Yard on Terminal Rd - Engineering and Construction	Multimodal Connectivity & Terminal Improvements	Orleans Parish	$3,000,000
Short Line Track Upgrades	AKDN, ALM, BRS, BBAY, DSRR, DUSR, GOGR, GLSR, LAS, LDRR, LNW, NLA, NOPB, TIBR	Upgrades of short line trackage to handle 286k-lb maximum carload weights. Cost estimated at 20% of statewide needs. Provides for more efficient operations and 286k-lb carload capability. (Need for heavier rail).	SOGR / Infrastructure Upgrade	Statewide	$67,944,782
Upgrade Bridges, Rail, and ties	LAS	Upgrade Bridges, Rail, and ties	SOGR / Infrastructure Upgrade	Jackson/Bienville Parishes	$14,100,000
Bridge Upgrade	TIBR	Bridge Upgrade	SOGR / Infrastructure Upgrade	Beauregard Parish	$5,000,000
Ties, surface, rail, switch, & bridge upgrade	TIBR	Ties, surface, rail, switch, & bridge upgrade	SOGR / Infrastructure Upgrade	Beauregard Parish	$1,770,250
Cypremort - Upgrade rail, ties, ballast and grade crossings	LDRR	14 miles of upgrade from 85lb. rail to 115lb. Rail.	SOGR / Infrastructure Upgrade	St. Mary Parish	$1,500,000

Project Name	Railroad/ Stakeholder	Project Description	Project Type	Project Location	Estimated Cost
Lockport - Upgrade bridge, rail, ties, ballast and grade crossings	LDRR	1 mile upgrade from 90lb. to 115lb. rail	SOGR / Infrastructure Upgrade	Terrebonne Parish	$500,000
Bayou Sale branch - Hwy 317 crossing total rehabilitation	LDRR	Bayou Sale branch - Hwy 317 crossing total rehabilitation	Grade Crossing Safety	St. Mary Parish	$1,100,000
SEVERAL AKDN RR Xing (District 03) H.015160	AKDN	Safety improvement at crossing; upgrades	Grade Crossing Safety	District 03	$1,800,000
LA 18 STUDY UP RR Xing (JEFFERSON) H.015392	UP	Safety improvement at crossing; upgrades	Grade Crossing Safety	Jefferson	$600,000
OLD US 80 LAS RR Xing (BEINVILLE) H.012873	LAS	Safety improvement at crossing; closure	Grade Crossing Safety	Beinville	$50,000
LA 157 LAS RR Xing (BOSSIER) H.015389	LAS	Safety improvement at crossing; upgrades	Grade Crossing Safety	Bossier	$50,000
BENTON RD KCS RR Xing (BOSSIER) H.013021	CPKC	Safety improvement at crossing; Install raised median to discourage driving around gates	Grade Crossing Safety	Bossier	$100,000
CALHOUN RD KCS RR Xing (OUACHITA) H.012439	CPKC	Safety improvement at crossing; Upgrade signals	Grade Crossing Safety	Ouachita	$700,000
OLD HWY 1/SR-3089 UP RR Xing (ASCENSION) H.010074	UP	Safety improvement at crossing; Review area with UP & District 61	Grade Crossing Safety	Ascension	$80,000
LA 70 UP RR Xing (ASCENSION) H.010074	UP	Safety improvement at crossing; Review area with UP & District 61	Grade Crossing Safety	Ascension	$10,000
THOMAS RD IC RR Xing (E. BATON ROUGE) H.014897	IC	Safety improvement at crossing; Review if existing devices are sufficient.	Grade Crossing Safety	E. Baton Rouge	$100,000

Project Name	Railroad/ Stakeholder	Project Description	Project Type	Project Location	Estimated Cost
EMILY DR UP RR Xing (WEST BATON ROUGE) NA	UP	Safety improvement at crossing; remove sign and install CBA	Grade Crossing Safety	West Baton Rouge	TBD
LA 164 SPURS KCS RR Xing (WEBSTER) H.015132	CPKC	Safety improvement at crossing; Upgrades	Grade Crossing Safety	Webster	$50,000
SUMLIN RANCH RD KCS RR Xing (RICHLAND) H.015229	CPKC	Safety improvement at crossing; Try to close	Grade Crossing Safety	Richland	$300,000
CLYDE CHACHERE RD UP RR Xing (ALLEN) H.014931	UP	Safety improvement at crossing; Gate	Grade Crossing Safety	Allen	$250,000
CENTRAL AVE IC RR Xing (JEFFERSON) H.014910	IC	Safety improvement at crossing; DID DR	Grade Crossing Safety	Jefferson	$150,000
OLLA UP RR Xing (LASALLE) H.001853	UP	Safety improvement at crossing; Upgrade signals and do roadwork to do closure.	Grade Crossing Safety	Lasalle	$1,000,000
SWAN AVE KCS RR Xing (EAST B R) H.015145	CPKC	Safety improvement at crossing; Close 1 of 5	Grade Crossing Safety	East B R	$800,000
Jeff Davis Main St BNSF RR Xing (JEFFERSON DAVIS) TBA	BNSF	Safety improvement at crossing; Closure	Grade Crossing Safety	Jefferson Davis	$10,000
9TH ST UP RR Xing (ALLEN) H.015075	UP	Safety improvement at crossing; recommend closing this again	Grade Crossing Safety	Allen	$10,000
W FRANCIS ST UP RR Xing (WEST BATON ROUGE) H.015082	UP	Safety improvement at crossing; Upgrade - add CANTS	Grade Crossing Safety	West Baton Rouge	$200,000

Project Name	Railroad/ Stakeholder	Project Description	Project Type	Project Location	Estimated Cost
MCGEE RD UP RR Xing (CADDO) H.015081	UP	Safety improvement at crossing; consider gates	Grade Crossing Safety	Caddo	$250,000
4TH AVE UP RR Xing (JEFFERSON DAVIS) H.014938	UP	Safety improvement at crossing; Study for RRS	Grade Crossing Safety	Jefferson Davis	$350,000
BARKSDALE BLVD UP RR Xing (BOSSIER) H.013708	UP	Safety improvement at crossing; Remove	Grade Crossing Safety	Bossier	$50,000
US 165 UP RR Xing (ALLEN) H.015482	UP	Safety improvement at crossing; Remove	Grade Crossing Safety	Allen	$100,000
SEVERAL DHPS RR Xing (DESOTO) TBA	DHPS	Safety improvement at crossing; CBA for Desoto	Grade Crossing Safety	Desoto	$100,000
DORCY ROAD UP RR Xing (IBERVILLE) H.013438	UP	Safety improvement at crossing; Close and install signals	Grade Crossing Safety	Iberville	$250,000
BAYOU JACOB RD UP RR Xing (IBERVILLE) H.013715	UP	Safety improvement at crossing; Add turn lane to decrease stopping on track and upgrade signals	Grade Crossing Safety	Iberville	$600,000
RYAN ST LCHD (PRI) RR Xing (CALCASIEU) REQ	LCHD (PRI)	Safety improvement at crossing; Innovative warning being reviewed	Grade Crossing Safety	Calcasieu	$300,000
SCHEX DR KCS RR Xing (BOSSIER) H.015208	CPKC	Safety improvement at crossing; Close 1 of 3	Grade Crossing Safety	Bossier	$400,000

Project Name	Railroad/ Stakeholder	Project Description	Project Type	Project Location	Estimated Cost
LEVY ST. UP RR Xing (CADDO) H.015475	UP	Safety improvement at crossing; Review if existing devices are sufficient.	Grade Crossing Safety	Caddo	$250,000
SCENIC HWY IC RR Xing (E. BATON ROUGE) H.013864	IC	Safety improvement at crossing; Upgrade signals	Grade Crossing Safety	E. Baton Rouge	$400,000
2 UPGRADES KCS RR Xing (District 61) H.015133	CPKC	Safety improvement at crossing; Upgrades	Grade Crossing Safety	District 61	$600,000
WOODLAND DR KCS RR Xing (LINCOLN) H.009871	CPKC	Safety improvement at crossing; Still under review	Grade Crossing Safety	Lincoln	TBD
SEVERAL IC RR Xing (TANGIPAHOA) H.010702	IC	Safety improvement at crossing; Still under review	Grade Crossing Safety	Tangipahoa	$750,000
JONES ST KCS RR Xing (RED RIVER) H.015199	CPKC	Safety improvement at crossing; DR try to close	Grade Crossing Safety	Red River	$200,000
OAK HILL ST KCS RR Xing (SABINE) TBA	CPKC	Safety improvement at crossing; Review Profile	Grade Crossing Safety	Sabine	$150,000
Morning Glory UP RR Xing (EVANGELINE) H.015401	UP	Safety improvement at crossing; Added 2 crossings	Grade Crossing Safety	Evangeline	$300,000

Project Name	Railroad/ Stakeholder	Project Description	Project Type	Project Location	Estimated Cost
PARDUE RD UP RR Xing (RAPIDES) H.015132	UP	Safety improvement at crossing; Study for RRS	Grade Crossing Safety	Rapides	$50,000
VALLEY VIEW DR. UP RR Xing (CADDO) H.015400	UP	Safety improvement at crossing; Review if existing devices are sufficient.	Grade Crossing Safety	Caddo	TBD
MTPLEASENT-ZAC KCS RR Xing (E. BATON ROUGE) NA	CPKC	Safety improvement at crossing; Review if existing devices are sufficient.	Grade Crossing Safety	E. Baton Rouge	TBD
EDDY WILLIAMS UP RR Xing (RAPIDES) NA	UP	Safety improvement at crossing; Review if existing devices are sufficient.	Grade Crossing Safety	Rapides	TBD
ASCENSION ST KCS RR Xing (ASCENSION) NA	CPKC	Safety improvement at crossing; Review if existing devices are sufficient.	Grade Crossing Safety	Ascension	TBD
OAKDALE UP RR Xing (ALLEN) H.015122	UP	Safety improvement at crossing; Upgrade signals for Preempt	Grade Crossing Safety	Allen	$250,000
OLD PLAIN DEALING UP RR Xing (BOSSIER) H.012271	UP	Safety improvement at crossing; Upgrade signals for Preempt	Grade Crossing Safety	Bossier	$250,000
JACKSON ST. IC RR Xing (JEFFERSON) NA	IC	Safety improvement at crossing; Want to close	Grade Crossing Safety	Jefferson	$50,000

Project Name	Railroad/ Stakeholder	Project Description	Project Type	Project Location	Estimated Cost
Baldwin BNSF RR Xing (ST MARY) H.011706	BNSF	Safety improvement at crossing; Construct road for closures	Grade Crossing Safety	St Mary	$1,000,000
LOCKLEY ST BNSF RR Xing (ST MARY) H.011706	BNSF	Safety improvement at crossing; Part of SP21 above	Grade Crossing Safety	St Mary	$10,000
St. Mary BNSF RR Xing (ST MARY) H.011723	BNSF	Safety improvement at crossing; Roadwork to allow closure	Grade Crossing Safety	St Mary	$400,000
CORRIDOR IC RR Xing (ST JOHN THE BAPTIST) H.013017	IC	Safety improvement at crossing; Install/upgrade signals on corridor with possible closures.	Grade Crossing Safety	St John The Baptist	$2,000,000
W 19TH ST IC RR Xing (ST JOHN THE BAPTIST) H.013017	IC	Safety improvement at crossing; Part of C01 2016	Grade Crossing Safety	St John The Baptist	TBD
W 2ND ST IC RR Xing (ST JOHN THE BAPTIST) H.013017	IC	Safety improvement at crossing; Part of C01 2016	Grade Crossing Safety	St John The Baptist	TBD
CARDINAL ST. IC RR Xing (ST JOHN THE BAPTIST) H.013017	IC	Safety improvement at crossing; Part of C01 2016	Grade Crossing Safety	St John The Baptist	TBD

Project Name	Railroad/ Stakeholder	Project Description	Project Type	Project Location	Estimated Cost
W 15TH ST IC RR Xing (ST JOHN THE BAPTIST) H.013017	IC	Safety improvement at crossing; Part of C01 2016	Grade Crossing Safety	St John The Baptist	TBD
LA 3217 IC RR Xing (ST JOHN THE BAPTIST) H.013017	IC	Safety improvement at crossing; Part of C01 2016	Grade Crossing Safety	St John The Baptist	TBD
FOURTH ST. IC RR Xing (ST JOHN THE BAPTIST) H.013017	IC	Safety improvement at crossing; Part of C01 2016	Grade Crossing Safety	St John The Baptist	TBD
PINE ST IC RR Xing (ST JOHN THE BAPTIST) H.013017	IC	Safety improvement at crossing; Part of C01 2016	Grade Crossing Safety	St John The Baptist	TBD
W 1ST ST IC RR Xing (ST JOHN THE BAPTIST) H.013017	IC	Safety improvement at crossing; Part of C01 2016	Grade Crossing Safety	St John The Baptist	TBD
LEGION ST IC RR Xing (ST JAMES) H.015173	IC	Safety improvement at crossing; Gate	Grade Crossing Safety	St James	$300,000
SAMUEL JONES RD IC RR Xing (ST JAMES) H.015174	IC	Safety improvement at crossing; Gate	Grade Crossing Safety	St James	$300,000

Project Name	Railroad/ Stakeholder	Project Description	Project Type	Project Location	Estimated Cost
SYDNEY WOODS IC RR Xing (LIVINGSTON) TBA	IC	Safety improvement at crossing; Gate	Grade Crossing Safety	Livingston	$300,000
GENE BALL RD UP RR Xing (RAPIDES) H.015479	CPKC	Safety improvement at crossing; Gate	Grade Crossing Safety	St John	TBD
GENE BALL RD UP RR Xing (RAPIDES) H.015479	UP	Safety improvement at crossing; Gate	Grade Crossing Safety	Rapides	$300,000
TX EASTERN RD UP RR Xing (BEAUREGARD) H.015481	UP	Safety improvement at crossing; Gate	Grade Crossing Safety	Beauregard	$300,000
NASH RD UP RR Xing (DESOTO) H.015479	UP	Safety improvement at crossing; Gate	Grade Crossing Safety	Desoto	$300,000
LA 3126 / 16 AKDN RR Xing (ACADIA) H.015162	AKDN	Safety improvement at crossing; UPGRADES	Grade Crossing Safety	Acadia	$600,000
E THIRD STREET BNSF RR Xing (LAFAYETTE) H.015068	BNSF	Safety improvement at crossing; Study for RRS	Grade Crossing Safety	Lafayette	TBD
MUDD ST BNSF RR Xing (LAFAYETTE) H.015068	BNSF	Safety improvement at crossing; Study for RRS	Grade Crossing Safety	Lafayette	TBD

Project Name	Railroad/ Stakeholder	Project Description	Project Type	Project Location	Estimated Cost
COOPER UP RR Xing (CALCASIEU) H.015649	UP	Safety improvement at crossing	Grade Crossing Safety	Calcasieu	$250,000
Port of Plaquemines 11 mile rail extension	NOGC, Port of Plaquemines	Extend current NOGC rail an additional 11 miles to directly serve current PPHTD customers, and provide access to the future container port.	Multimodal Connectivity & Terminal Improvements	Plaquemines	$50,000,000
Increased Capacity at Westwego	NOGC	Develop increased capacity at UP interchange at Westwego to support efficiency and facilitate current operations and facilitate growth.	SOGR / Infrastructure Upgrade	Westwego	$10,000,000
Embedded Rail improvements	NOGC	Replace embedded rail running through Gretna street.	SOGR / Infrastructure Upgrade	Gretna	$2,030,000
Addition of double main line in Westwego	NOGC	Tie ends of a sidings into the main line, enabling train passing to improve handling of Ag unit trains	SOGR / Infrastructure Upgrade	Westwego	$4,200,000
Bridge Rehabilitation	NS	Movable Seabrook Rail Bridge	SOGR / Infrastructure Upgrade	New Orleans	$12,000,000
Port Manchac Rail Exp.	CN and Port Manchac	New Rail Bridge to CN Mainline & 1,200 ft. of additional storage track	Multimodal Connectivity & Terminal Improvements	Tangipahoa Parish	$400,000
Industrial Lead Railroad Rehabilitation Project	PRI, Port of Lake Charles	Rehabilitate existing track to re-establish intermodal short line freight rail connection to the Port of Lake Charles Industrial Canal Terminal*	Multimodal Connectivity & Terminal Improvements	Lake Charles	$8,000,000

Table 78: Short-Term 2024-2027 Passenger Program Investments

Project Name	Railroad/ Stakeholder	Project Description	Project Type	Project Location	Estimated Cost
Hammond Station Improvements/ Upgrades	Amtrak	A. Replace two accessible ramp concrete lower landings adjacent to the existing platform and repair transitions. B. Replace detectable warning surface along the platform edge. C. Reset brick pavers along the accessible routes. D. Provide accessible ramp and landing at station entrance. E. Replace one accessible parking(long term) & drop off area. F. Reset noncompliant platform signage. G. Provide accessible threshold for the single swing track side entrance door and provide modifications to the existing Door for a weather tight seal. H. Provide compliant automatic door opener for the single swing track side door and on parking side door leaf. I. Provide required maneuvering clearance for doors and recessed condition. J. Adjust double swing parking side door closers to accessible compliance and smooth operation. K. Address station interior non-compliant conditions per the post construction assessment report for ADA compliance. L. Repair or replace existing expansion joints and surrounding concrete area within the platform. M. Replace concrete pad for the exterior single swing door to meet ADA clearance floor area	Passenger Service Improvement	Hammond	$1,700,000

Project Name	Railroad/ Stakeholder	Project Description	Project Type	Project Location	Estimated Cost
Lafayette Station Improvements/ Upgrades	Amtrak	A. New 200 feet long by 12 feet wide ADA compliant 8" top-of-rail (tor) platform. B. Provide new ADA access connection at north end. Provide connection to existing platform at south end. C. Provide new tactile edge and signage along new platform length. D. Provide platform lighting poles, fixtures, and associated conduit and wiring. E. Provide lighting relay panel for lighting.	Passenger Service Improvement	Lafayette	$2,100,000
New Iberia Station Improvements/ Upgrades	Amtrak	A. 500 feet long by 13 feet wide ADA compliant 8" above top-of-rail (tor) platform. B. Provide concrete accessible walkway between platform and parking area. C. Provide concrete accessible ramp from platform down to w Washington street d. Provide concrete ADA parking with striping and signage. E. Provide detectable walking surface edge and signage along platform length. F. Remove and reinstall existing waiting shelter. G. Provide wheel chair lift enclosure (WCLE). H. Provide platform lighting poles, fixtures, and associated conduit and wiring.	Passenger Service Improvement	New Iberia	$3,000,000
Schriever Station Improvements/ Upgrades	Amtrak	1. New 550' 8" ATOR platform and accessible pathways. 2. Provide pathways from station to access new platform. 3. Provide platform lighting. 4. Provide new signage.	Passenger Service Improvement	Schriever	$2,300,000
Slidell Station Improvements/ Upgrades	Amtrak	1. New 550' 8" ATOR platform and accessible pathways. 2. Provide pathways from station to access new platform. 3. Provide platform lighting. 4. Provide new signage.	Passenger Service Improvement	Slidell	$2,300,000
New Orleans – Gulfport -Mobile intercity rail	Amtrak	Louisiana's contribution for covering implementation costs.	Passenger Service Expansion	New Orleans – Gulfport - Mobile Corridor	$6,598,248

Project Name	Railroad/ Stakeholder	Project Description	Project Type	Project Location	Estimated Cost
Baton Rouge - New Orleans intercity rail - Grade Crossing/ Bridge Replacement	CPKC, CN, Amtrak	Provides for enhanced mobility for Louisiana residents by instituting a new intercity passenger rail service on a corridor linked only by highways. Grade crossing, track and signal and replacement of the Bonnet Carre' spillway bridge are some of the infrastructure improvements identified for funding	Passenger Service Expansion	Baton Route - New Orleans Corridor	$26,491,106
Baton Rouge - New Orleans intercity rail - pre-construction engineering, environmental clearance, and station planning	CPKC, CN, Amtrak	Provides for enhanced mobility for Louisiana residents by instituting a new intercity passenger rail service on a corridor linked only by highways. The estimated cost represents remaining funding for pre-construction activities needed to implement four roundtrip service on the Baton Rouge - New Orleans corridor, excluding costs associated with the Grade Crossing/Bridge Replacement project.	Passenger Service Expansion	Baton Route - New Orleans Corridor	$28,545,338
NOUPT Multi-Service Regional Rail Hub Improvements	NOUPT	Platform modifications (ADA, security, electrical, air, communications, and water systems), Canopy Repairs, and related Bus Area Renovations	Passenger Service Improvement	New Orleans	$1,300,000
Local Transit Coordination	Amtrak and Local Agencies	Coordinate train arrivals with local transit schedules and routes.	Passenger Multimodal Connectivity	Statewide	TBD

Table 79: Long-Term 2028-2043 Freight Program Investments

Project Name	Railroad/ Stakeholder	Project Description	Project Type	Project Location	Estimated Cost
AKDN Road Closures, Crossing Safety Improvement	AKDN	Closing of multiple road crossing within short distances on the railroad and placement of highway stop signs on state roads	Grade Crossing Safety		$1,950,506
Almonaster Avenue Bridge Rehabilitation	CSX, DOTD	This project has been ongoing since Katrina, and the final set of plans are now almost in place.	SOGR / Infrastructure Upgrade	New Orleans	$40,000,000
At-Grade Crossing Closure - Frontage Road	CSX	At-Grade Crossing Closure - Frontage Road	Grade Crossing Safety	Orleans Parish	TBD
Crossing Safety Improvements	Various Railroads	Grade crossing improvements	Grade Crossing Safety	Statewide	$136,000,000
Freight lead extension into NS Oliver Yard	NS	Extending current freight lead into NS Oliver, from the existing 3,000' to 12,000', to help congestion on Back Belt. It would provide a place for all trains operating to/from or working at Oliver Yard to perform that work completely off Back Belt mainline trackage. New interchange flexibility will be vital to maintaining current and supporting future interchange operations in the gateway.	Multimodal Connectivity & Terminal Improvements	Orleans Parish	$100,000,000
LAS Road Closures	LAS	Working with DOTD on road closures.	Grade Crossing Safety		$32,564,961
NOGC Rail Relocation	NOGC	Closure of 100 grade crossings in Gretna. Relocation of NOGC tracks south of New Orleans to access new port facilities. Cost estimated at 85% of project needs.	Multimodal Connectivity & Terminal Improvements	Gretna / Jefferson Parish	$613,220,057
NOPB Road Closures	NOPB	NOPB, DOTD, and the City of New Orleans are working together to fund and apply for grants to for some crossing upgrades. Project remains under development and a specific list of roads is not yet available.	Grade Crossing Safety	New Orleans	$26,047,123

Project Name	Railroad/ Stakeholder	Project Description	Project Type	Project Location	Estimated Cost
Port Rail Inc. Road Closures, Crossing Safety Improvements	PRI	Working with DOTD on road closures and upgrade crossing warning signals.	Grade Crossing Safety	Lake Charles	$6,517,838
Michoud Boulevard Grade Separation	CSX	Michoud Boulevard Grade Separated Crossing	Grade Crossing Safety		TBD
Oliver Yard - Separate Switch Need for NS	NS	Separate switch needed	Multimodal Connectivity & Terminal Improvements	New Orleans	TBD
Realign Mainline	NOPB	Realign the mainline by the NSA building at Poland Ave and the river. It currently takes the spur through a residential neighborhood which creates backups.	SOGR / Infrastructure Upgrade	New Orleans	TBD
Short Rail Infrastructure	DSRR, CPKC	Upgrades to a short-line rail system in Arkansas and Louisiana. Projects will benefit the Port of Lake Providence, Port of Madison and local economies by increasing capacity, efficiency and safety for goods shipped along the corridor	SOGR / Infrastructure Upgrade	East Carroll Parish	$53,402,660
CN Mainline, Southport Jct. to Kenner Jct. (Louis Armstrong International Airport Improvement)	CN, Amtrak	Improvement to CN mainline Southport Jct. to Kenner Jct.. Amtrak's Sunset Limited, City of NOLA and proposed NOL-BTR service use this trackage.	SOGR / Infrastructure Upgrade		TBD
Assessment of 130 crossings	BNSF	Study on 130 crossings to see which ones can use modification including overpass, underpass, gates, lights, and other updates	Grade Crossing Safety		TBD
New Orleans Rail Gateway	BNSF, CN, CSX, CPKC, NS, UP	Full construction of the project. Cost estimated 90% of project needs.	SOGR / Infrastructure Upgrade		$589,463,912

Project Name	Railroad/ Stakeholder	Project Description	Project Type	Project Location	Estimated Cost
Short Line Track Upgrades	AKDN, ALM, BRS, BBAY, DSRR, DUSR, GOGR, GLSR, LAS, LDRR, LNW, NLA,NOPB, TIBR	Upgrades of short line trackage to handle 286k-lb maximum carload weights. Cost estimated at 80% of statewide needs. Provides for more efficient operations and 286k-lb carload capability.	SOGR / Infrastructure Upgrade		$216,221,392
Eliminate Grade Crossing at Saint Claude	NS	Eliminate Grade Crossing at Saint Claude & Press Street	Grade Crossing Safety	New Orleans	TBD
Port of Plaquemines Improvements - Container Terminal	NOGC, Port of Plaquemines	Development of a 200+ acre deepwater port capable of handling 13-14k TEU vessels; container and bulk rail handling capacity. The container terminal will contain a small rail yard that will enable the loading of containers onto intermodal rail flat cars	Multimodal Connectivity & Terminal Improvements		$500,000,000
Port of South Louisiana Expansion	CPKC, Port of South Louisiana	Further growth under consideration including rail	Multimodal Connectivity & Terminal Improvements		TBD
Bridge rehabilitation/ upgrade	TIBR	Numerous bridges, expensive to replace/repair them, especially after damage from a storm or natural disaster.	SOGR / Infrastructure Upgrade		TBD
Livonia Yard Improvements	UP	Reduce congestion in Livonia Yard	Multimodal Connectivity & Terminal Improvements	Pointe Coupee Parish	TBD
Louisiana International Terminal	NS, Louisiana International Terminal	New terminal to be served by water, rail, truck. Possible infrastructure improvements on Chalmette Branch	Multimodal Connectivity & Terminal Improvements	St Bernard Parish	$1,800,000,000
Equipment shortage	Various Railroads and Shippers	Single in-state facility manufacturing rail cars and there is currently a 2-3 year wait period for new equipment (railcars).	Rolling Stock		TBD

Project Name	Railroad/ Stakeholder	Project Description	Project Type	Project Location	Estimated Cost
Julia St. KCS Rr Xing (E. Baton Rouge) H.012449	CPKC	Safety improvement at crossing; EBR Grant project, corridor improvements.	Grade Crossing Safety	E. BATON ROUGE	$2,000,000
Industrial Blvd UP RR Xing (IBERVILLE) H.002186	UP	Safety improvement at crossing; Close 1148	Grade Crossing Safety	IBERVILLE	$400,000
Main UP RR Xing (IBERVILLE) H.012851	UP	Safety improvement at crossing; Upgrade signals	Grade Crossing Safety	IBERVILLE	$300,000
Canal UP RR Xing (IBERVILLE) H.012851	UP	Safety improvement at crossing; Upgrade signals	Grade Crossing Safety	IBERVILLE	$300,000
PLAQUEMINE ST UP RR Xing (IBERVILLE) H.012851	UP	Safety improvement at crossing; Closure	Grade Crossing Safety	IBERVILLE	TBD
DESOBRY UP RR Xing (IBERVILLE) H.012851	UP	Safety improvement at crossing; Upgrade signals	Grade Crossing Safety	IBERVILLE	$300,000
W.W. HARLE UP RR Xing (IBERVILLE) H.012851	UP	Safety improvement at crossing; Upgrade signals	Grade Crossing Safety	IBERVILLE	$300,000
LA 175 KCS RR Xing (DESOTO) H.014462	CPKC	Safety improvement at crossing; Roadwork to make safer	Grade Crossing Safety	DESOTO	$300,000

Project Name	Railroad/ Stakeholder	Project Description	Project Type	Project Location	Estimated Cost
LA 63 IC RR Xing (LIVINGSTON) H.014933	IC	Safety improvement at crossing; Gate	Grade Crossing Safety	LIVINGSTON	$800,000
HESTER IC RR Xing (ST JAMES) H.014441	IC	Safety improvement at crossing; Upgrade 2 crossing & geo; close 2	Grade Crossing Safety	ST JAMES	$400,000
HESTER IC RR Xing (ST JAMES) H.014469	IC	Safety improvement at crossing; Install 2 signals; close 1 more	Grade Crossing Safety	ST JAMES	$500,000
DAVENPORT AVE UP RR Xing (MOREHOUSE) H.014904	UP	Safety improvement at crossing	Grade Crossing Safety	MOREHOUSE	$500,000
W PLAQUEMINE ST BNSF RR Xing (JEFFERSON DAVIS) H.012872	BNSF	Safety improvement at crossing; Remove the Doyle legs of the roadway intersection	Grade Crossing Safety	JEFFERSON DAVIS	$500,000
MONTICELLO AVE NOPB RR Xing (JEFFERSON) H.013825	NOPB	Safety improvement at crossing; Upgrade or close; in conjunction with Dakin St.	Grade Crossing Safety	JEFFERSON	$250,000
DAKIN ST NOPB RR Xing (JEFFERSON) H.013825	NOPB	Safety improvement at crossing; Upgrade or close; in conjunction with Monticello Ave.	Grade Crossing Safety	JEFFERSON	$250,000
DURBIN RD. IC RR Xing (TANGIPAHOA) NA	IC	Safety improvement at crossing; Review if existing devices are sufficient.	Grade Crossing Safety	TANGIPAHOA	TBD

Project Name	Railroad/ Stakeholder	Project Description	Project Type	Project Location	Estimated Cost
LINCOLN PARK RD IC RR Xing (TANGIPAHOA) H.010702	IC	Safety improvement at crossing; Review with IC	Grade Crossing Safety	TANGIPAHOA	TBD
CHEEKS RD KCS RR Xing (OUACHITA) H.015478	CPKC	Safety improvement at crossing; Upgrade signals	Grade Crossing Safety	OUACHITA	TBD
LA 782-2 KCS RR Xing (BOSSIER) H.015123	CPKC	Safety improvement at crossing; Study for RRS	Grade Crossing Safety	BOSSIER	$500,000
COUVILLION ST KCS RR Xing (AVOYELLES) NA	CPKC	Safety improvement at crossing; Closure	Grade Crossing Safety	Avoyelles	$50,000
CITY ST IC RR Xing (TANGIPAHOA) H.014308	IC	Safety improvement at crossing; Build road to close	Grade Crossing Safety	Tangipahoa	$500,000
SUPERIOR AVE IC RR Xing (WASHINGTON) H.010980	IC	Safety improvement at crossing; Upgrade signals	Grade Crossing Safety	Washington	$400,000
N FOSTER DR. IC RR Xing (EBR) H.014430	IC	Safety improvement at crossing; Gate	Grade Crossing Safety	EBR	$500,000
N ARDENWOOD IC RR Xing (EBR) H.014430	IC	Safety improvement at crossing; Gate	Grade Crossing Safety	EBR	$500,000

Project Name	Railroad/ Stakeholder	Project Description	Project Type	Project Location	Estimated Cost
RAILROAD STREET KCS RR Xing (ASCENSION) H.013779	CPKC	Safety improvement at crossing; Build road to close	Grade Crossing Safety	Ascension	TBD
HOLLIER BNSF RR Xing (LAFAYETTE) H.015172	BNSF	Safety improvement at crossing; Close	Grade Crossing Safety	Lafayette	$300,000
Rail Bridge Improvement	NS	Florida Avenue Rail Bridge	SOGR / Infrastructure Upgrade	New Orleans	TBD
Road & Rail Congestion Management	UP	Grade separation at Nine Mile Point Rd. and UP crossing	Grade Crossing Safety	Jefferson	$10,000,000
Road & Rail Congestion Management	NS	Grade separation at LA 39 & NS crossing	Grade Crossing Safety	St. Bernard	TBD
Road & Rail Congestion Management	NS	Grade separation at LA 46 & NS crossing	Grade Crossing Safety	St. Bernard	TBD
NOLA Grade Crossing Improvements	NS/City of New Orleans	Rehabilitation of 1940' & 1950's railroad grade separations	Grade Crossing Safety	New Orleans	TBD
Road & Rail Congestion Management	NS	Grade separation at St. Bernard Highway	Grade Crossing Safety	St. Bernard	TBD
Transload facility - Construction	NOPB	New transloading facility located South of Gentilly Yard on Terminal Rd - Construction	Multimodal Connectivity & Terminal Improvements	Orleans Parish	TBD
Industrial Park East Rail Yard	PRI, Port of Lake Charles	Construct new rail storage yard to support tenant operations. The project would also establish a new connection from the LED site to the UP short line rail.	Multimodal Connectivity & Terminal Improvements	Lake Charles	$12,000,000

Table 80: Long-Term 2028-2043 Passenger Program Investments

Project Name	Railroad/ Stakeholder	Project Description	Project Type	Project Location	Estimated Cost
Shreveport/Bossier City - Dallas/Fort Worth and Future (intercity rail)	Amtrak	Environmental planning, design, and initial construction of route in Louisiana. Provides for enhanced mobility for Louisiana residents by instituting a new rail service on an intercity corridor linked only by highways.	Passenger Service Expansion	Shreveport/Bossier City - Dallas/Fort Worth corridor	$39,552,694
Shreveport/Bossier City - Dallas/Fort Worth and Future (intercity rail)	Amtrak	Full construction of route and stations; Acquisition of rolling stock.	Passenger Service Expansion	Shreveport/Bossier City - Dallas/Fort Worth corridor	$355,974,243
Sunset Limited daily service	Amtrak	This route operates between Los Angeles and New Orleans via Houston, San Antonio and El Paso, Texas; Tucson, Ariz.; and other communities. The frequency will be increased to daily service / 7 days per week	Passenger Service Expansion	Statewide	TBD
Connection to Cruise Ship Terminals in New Orleans	Amtrak	Gulf Coast Service will have the opportunity to connect with the New Orleans cruise ship terminal	Passenger Multimodal Connectivity	Orleans Parish	TBD
Baton Rouge - Shreveport (intercity rail)	Amtrak	Operate passenger service between Baton Rouge and Shreveport	Passenger Service Expansion	Baton Rouge – Shreveport corridor	TBD
Baton Rouge - New Orleans intercity rail - Grade Crossing/ Bridge Replacement	CPKC, CN, Amtrak	Provides for enhanced mobility for Louisiana residents by instituting a new intercity passenger rail service on a corridor linked only by highways. Grade crossing, track and signal and replacement of the Bonnet Carre' spillway bridge are some of the infrastructure improvements identified for funding.	Passenger Service Expansion	Baton Rouge - New Orleans corridor	$105,964,426

Project Name	Railroad/ Stakeholder	Project Description	Project Type	Project Location	Estimated Cost
Baton Rouge - New Orleans intercity rail - capital construction	CPKC, CN, Amtrak	Provides for enhanced mobility for Louisiana residents by instituting a new intercity passenger rail service on a corridor linked only by highways. The estimated cost represents remaining funding for capital construction needed to implement four roundtrip service on the Baton Rouge - New Orleans corridor, excluding costs associated with the Grade Crossing/Bridge Replacement project.	Passenger Service Expansion	Baton Rouge - New Orleans corridor	$285,453,378
NOUPT Multi-Service Regional Rail Hub Improvements	NOUPT	Platform modifications (ADA, security, electrical, air, communications, and water systems), Canopy Repairs, and related Bus Area Renovations	Passenger Service Improvement	New Orleans	$11,700,000